CHAPTER 6
DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

The immediate purpose of defensive actions is to resist, defeat, or destroy an enemy attack and gain the initiative for the offense. Defensive operations defeat an enemy attack, buy time, economize forces, or develop conditions favorable for offensive operations. Defensive actions alone are not decisive; they must be combined with or followed by offensive action. The TF defends temporarily to create the conditions necessary to resume offensive operations in order to defeat the enemy decisively. As part of the brigade, the TF may defend, conduct retrograde operations, counterattack, or perform security operations or economy of force tasks. Often, a defensive engagement requires the task force to execute several of these tasks over its course. Even within the conduct of a brigade defense, the task force exploits opportunities to conduct offensive operations within its AOs to deprive the enemy of the initiative and create the conditions to assume the offensive.

Section I. FUNDAMENTALS OF THE DEFENSE

This section discusses the fundamentals of the defense as they apply to the tank and mechanized infantry battalion task force.

6-1. PURPOSE OF THE DEFENSE

The main purpose of the defense is to force or deceive the enemy into attacking under unfavorable circumstances, defeat or destroy his attack, and regain the initiative for the offense. The defending commander seeks to dictate where the fight will occur, preparing the terrain and conditions to his advantage while simultaneously denying the enemy adequate intelligence. Defense is a temporary measure used to identify or exploit enemy weaknesses. Use of the defense provides the opportunity to transition to the offense. In general, the TF defends to--

- Defeat or destroy an attacking enemy.
- Increase the enemy's vulnerability by forcing him to concentrate his forces.
- Gain time.
- Deny enemy entry into an area or retain terrain.
- Economize forces in one area to apply decisive force elsewhere.
- Prepare to resume the offensive.
- Develop favorable conditions for offensive actions.
- Reduce the enemy's capability for offensive operations.

6-2. ORGANIZATION OF DEFENSIVE ACTIONS

Defensive operations are organized around a framework of a security area and a main battle area.

a. **Security Area**. The brigade normally establishes a security force to provide early warning, reaction time, and initial resistance to the enemy. Depending on the brigade

commander's guidance and plan, the TF has several possible security force missions and options. The TF may--

- Establish a security area layered behind the brigade's security area to add depth to the effort.
- Secure its own flanks and rear while brigade assets conduct the primary security area effort forward of the FEBA.
- Conduct its own security effort in the absence of a higher echelon security force.
- Provide units for the brigade security force. This could include the scout platoon, mortar platoon, or both; maneuver platoons or company teams; or the entire TF.

(1) ***Security Area Definition***. The brigade commander defines the brigade's security area, the battle handover line from brigade to TF, the exact trace of the FEBA, and where he envisions the main TF fight will occur. From this the TF commander can determine how to structure his security area and the array of forces to employ. If the TF commander must organize his own security force, he chooses from three basic options:

- Use the scout platoon only as a screening force.
- Use the scout platoon in conjunction with maneuver elements, mortars, or a company team (or in combination) in a guard mission.
- Use a company team with or without the scout platoon and mortars in a guard mission.

(2) ***Specific Guidance and Tasks***. No matter what task organization he implements, the commander should provide the force with specific guidance and tasks. This may include--

- Duration of the mission.
- Results to be achieved against the enemy.
- Specific CCIR with associated NAIs and TAIs.
- Avenues of approach to be monitored with PIR and LTIOV.
- CS and CSS.
- Disengagement and withdrawal criteria and rearward passage coordinating instructions.
- Follow-on tasks or missions.

(3) ***Simultaneous Missions***. Using TF resources to establish a security area while simultaneously requiring the TF to defend the MBA is risky and divides the attention of the commander. Whenever possible, this should be avoided.

b. **Main Battle Area**. The brigade and its TFs deploy the bulk of their combat power in the MBA. The brigade MBA extends from the FEBA to the rear boundary of the forward TFs. TF main battle areas are subdivisions of the brigade's MBA. The FEBA marks the foremost limit of the areas in which the preponderance of ground combat units deploy, excluding the areas in which security forces are operating. The brigade commander assigns the TF MBAs by establishing unit boundaries. Brigade and TF commanders establish areas of operation, battle positions, or strongpoints to implement their concepts of operations. As in all operations, commanders promote freedom of action by using the least restrictive control measures necessary to implement their tactical concepts (Figure 6-1).

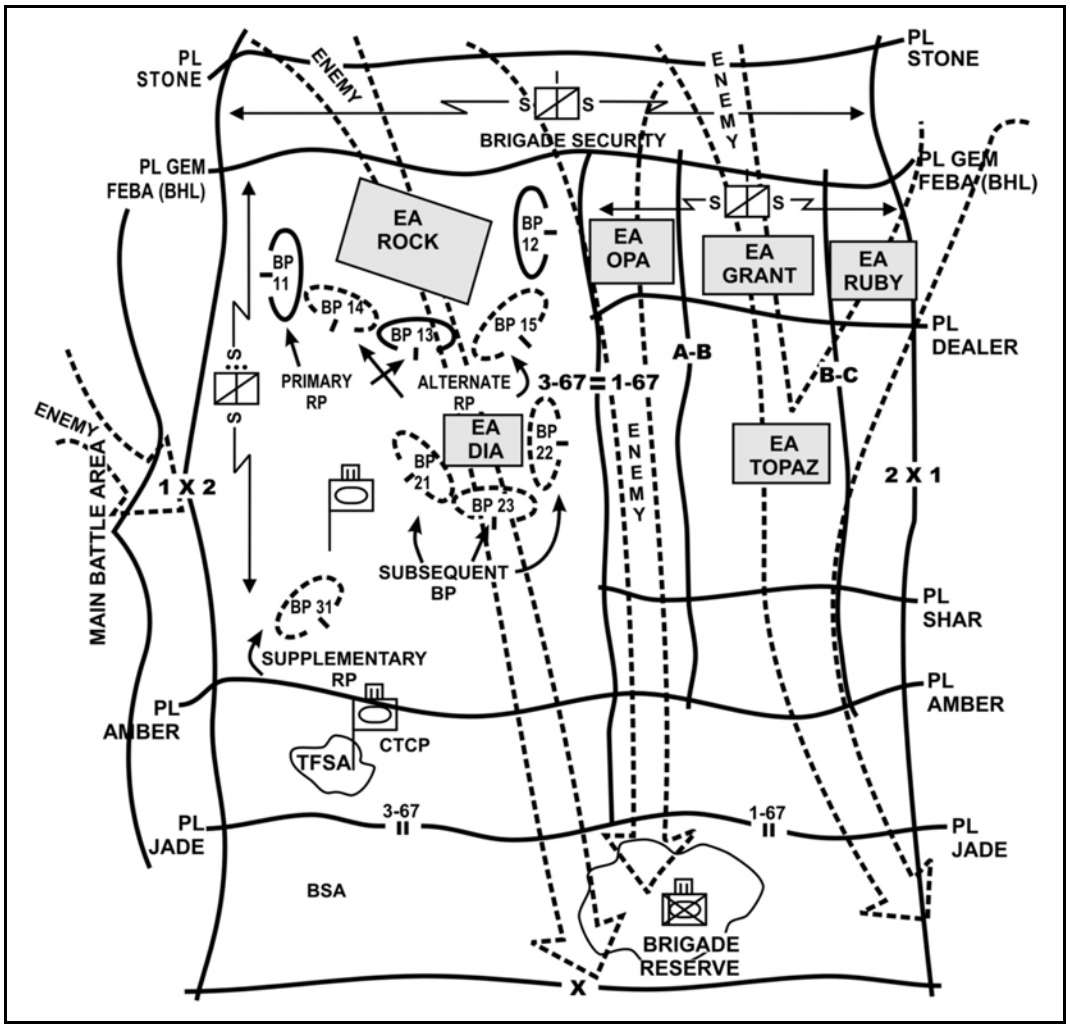


Figure 6-1. Sample defensive graphics for linear operations.

6-3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEFENSE

Much like offensive operations, the TF differs from its more traditional counterparts only in its operational style. The characteristics of the defense remain largely unchanged. Due to its advantages in information, lethality, and mobility, the TF can defend in linear as well as nonlinear frameworks. The ISR capabilities provided by brigade, as well as those within the TF structure, enable the TF to locate and discern the enemy's main and supporting efforts. Preparation, security, disruption, massing effects, and flexibility continue to characterize TF defensive operations.

a. **Preparation**. Against an opponent operating in a more conventional style, the TF commander determines likely enemy avenues of approach, likely enemy schemes of maneuver, where to kill the enemy, integration of obstacles, unit positioning, and integration of indirect fires, and he assigns mission accordingly. The S2, S3, and BOS representatives execute the MDMP under the XO's supervision for the commander's approval. The command and control architecture allows the commander to circulate on the battlefield while issuing guidance and approving products throughout the process. The staff is able to interface with brigade and division for sophisticated computer analysis of enemy COAs and friendly plans. Additional defensive preparations include--

- Designate a reserve.
- Conduct rehearsals, to include employment of the reserve and counterattack forces.
- Position forces in depth.
- Reinforce terrain with obstacles to favor the defender.

b. **Security**. Since a force defends to conserve combat power for use elsewhere, or at a later time, commanders must secure the force. The TF ensures security by employing reconnaissance elements throughout the depth and breadth of its assigned AO. Deception and information operations aid in securing the force and confuse the enemy as to the TF's manner of defense. The TF secures the force through integrated security operations tied with the brigade reconnaissance troop and ISR assets.

c. **Disruption**. Defenders disrupt an attacker's tempo and synchronization by countering his initiative and preventing him from massing overwhelming combat power. Disruption attacks the enemy's will to fight. Fires, SCATMINEs, unexpected defensive positions, local counterattacks at all levels, and attacks delivered by a highly mobile striking force combine to disrupt the enemy's attack and break his will to continue offensive operations. Repositioning forces, aggressive local force protection measures, and random employment of roadblocks, ambushes, checkpoints, and information operations combine to disrupt the threat of asymmetrical attack. Attacks on these disrupt enemy efforts to fight as a combined arms team. Maneuver units deceive the enemy as to the nature of their defense and employ local combined arms counterattacks to break the tempo of his attack. The brigade's integrated ISR capability produces dominant situational understanding that allows the commander to "see" and prevent the enemy from fully preparing his attack.

d. **Massing Effects**. The TF shapes and decides the battle by massing (focusing, distributing, and shifting) the effects of overwhelming combat power (direct fire, indirect fire, and obstacles). Effects should be synchronized around an engagement area(s) in time and space and be rapid and unexpected so that they break the enemy's offensive tempo and disrupt his attack.

(1) The commander employs integrated ISR to shift the effects of fires and maneuver forces so that they are repeatedly focused and refocused to achieve decisive, destructive, and disruptive effects upon the enemy's attack. The commander must be audacious in achieving overwhelming combat effects at the decisive point by employing dominant situational understanding to take acceptable risks in other areas.

(2) The critical planning piece for both maneuver and fire support during defensive operations is EA development. Although EAs may also be divided into sectors of fire, it is important to understand that defensive systems are not designed around the EAs but rather around avenues of approach. EAs and sectors of fire are not intended to restrict fires or cause operations to become static or fixed; they are used only as a tool to concentrate fires and to optimize their effects. The seven steps listed below represent a *way* to build an engagement area. Although listed sequentially, some steps (marked by an asterisk) can and should be done concurrently.

(a) Identify all likely enemy avenues of approach.
(b) Determine likely enemy scheme of maneuver.
(c) Determine where to kill the enemy.
(d) Plan and integrate obstacles.*

(e) Emplace weapon systems.*
(f) Plan and integrate indirect fires.*
(g) Rehearse the execution of operations in the engagement area.

e. **Flexibility**. The defender gains flexibility by sound preparation, disposition in depth, retention of reserves, and effective command and control. The defense is characterized by rapid simultaneous and collaborative planning with flexible execution. Contingency planning permits flexibility. Flexibility also requires that the commander "see" the battlefield to detect the enemy's scheme of maneuver early. IPB determines likely enemy actions, and security elements confirm or deny those actions.

Section II. TYPES OF DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

There are three types of defensive actions: area defense, mobile defense, and retrograde operations. Each of these types of defensive actions contains elements of the others and usually contains both static and dynamic aspects. TFs serve as the primary maneuver elements or terrain-controlling units for the brigade in all types of defensive operations. They may defend AOs or positions or may serve as security forces or reserves as part of the brigade coordinated defense.

6-4. AREA DEFENSE

The area defense concentrates on denying an enemy force access to designated terrain for a specific time. Outright destruction of the enemy may not be a criterion for success. The focus is on retaining terrain where the bulk of the defending force positions itself in mutually supporting positions and controlling the terrain between positions. The defeat mechanism is fires into engagement areas, usually supplemented by intervention of a reserve. The commander uses his reserve force to reinforce fires, add depth, block penetrations, restore positions, or counterattack to destroy enemy forces and seize the initiative. Area defenses are conducted when--

- The mission requires holding certain terrain for a specific period of time.
- There is enough time to organize the position.
- The task force or brigade has less mobility than the enemy.
- The terrain limits counterattacks to a few probable employment options.
- The terrain affords natural lines of resistance and limits the enemy to a few well-defined avenues of approach, thereby restricting the enemy’s maneuver.

The TF commander generally selects one of two general techniques for an area defense--forward or defense in depth. However, the higher commander may define the general defensive scheme for the task force. The specific mission may impose constraints such as time, security, and retention of certain areas that are significant factors in determining how the brigade will defend.

a. **Forward Defense**. Due to its inherent lack of depth, the forward defense is the least preferred option. The intent of a forward defense is to limit the terrain over which the enemy can gain influence or control. The TF deploys the majority of its combat forces near the FEBA with the scout platoon establishing a relatively narrow security area (Figure 6-2, page 6-6). The TF fights to retain these forward positions and may conduct counterattacks against enemy penetrations or destroy enemy penetrations in forward engagement areas. While the TF may lack depth, company teams and platoons must build depth into the defense at their levels. The TF can expect to conduct a forward defense for

protection of critical assets or other forces or for political purposes such as defending an ally's threatened border. A TF may defend forward under the following conditions:

- Terrain forward in the AO favors the defense.
- Strong existing obstacles, such as a river, are located forward in the AO.
- The assigned AO lacks depth due to the location of the area or facility to be protected.
- Cover and concealment in the rear portion of the AO is limited.
- Higher headquarters directs the TF to retain or initially control forward terrain.

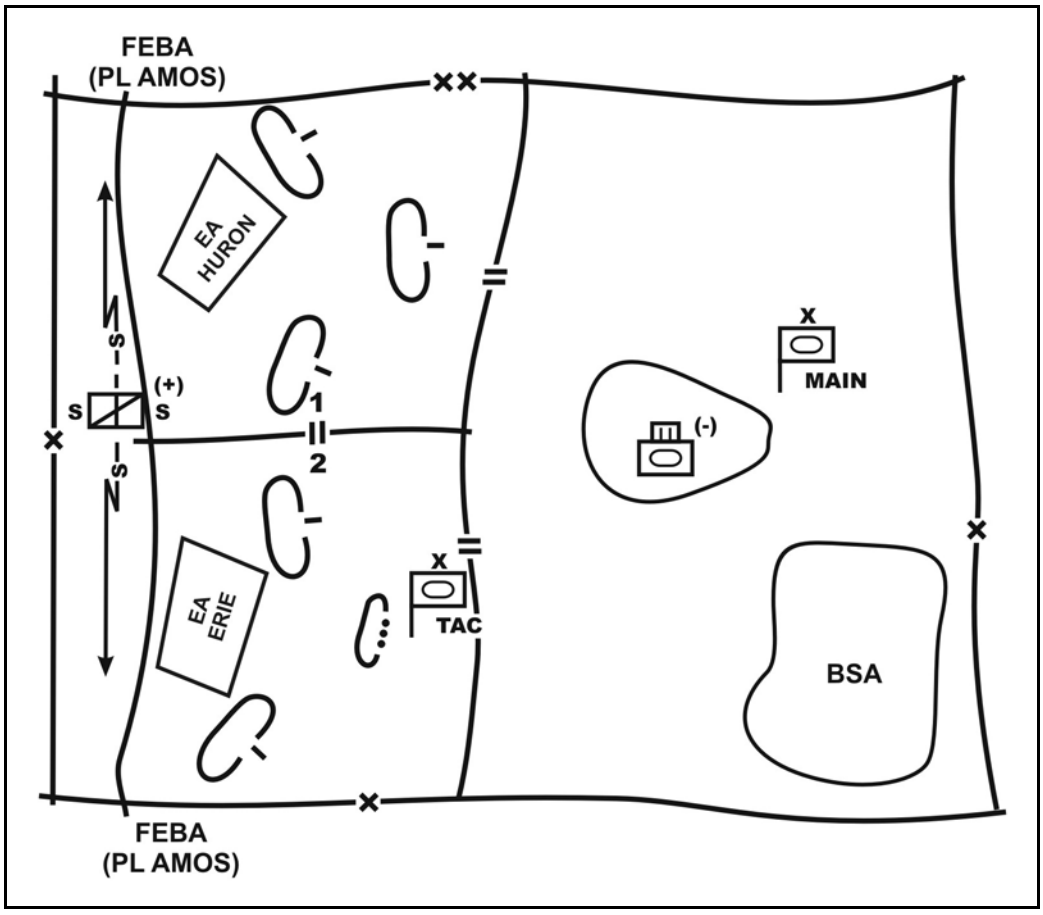


Figure 6-2. Example of a forward defense with task force and company teams defending forward.

b. **Defense in Depth**. A defense in depth is the preferred option when tactical conditions allow. It reduces the risk of the attacking enemy quickly penetrating the defense and affords some initial protection from enemy indirect fires. It also limits the enemy's ability to exploit a penetration through additional defensive positions employed in depth. The defense in depth provides more space and time to exploit intelligence and fire support assets to reduce the enemy's options, weaken his forces, and set the conditions for destruction. It provides the commander with more time to gain information about the enemy's intentions and likely future actions by taking full advantage of

INFOSYS and ISR capabilities before decisively committing to a plan of his own. It also allows the TF to execute decisive maneuver by effectively repositioning company teams to conduct counterattacks or to prevent penetrations (Figure 6-3).

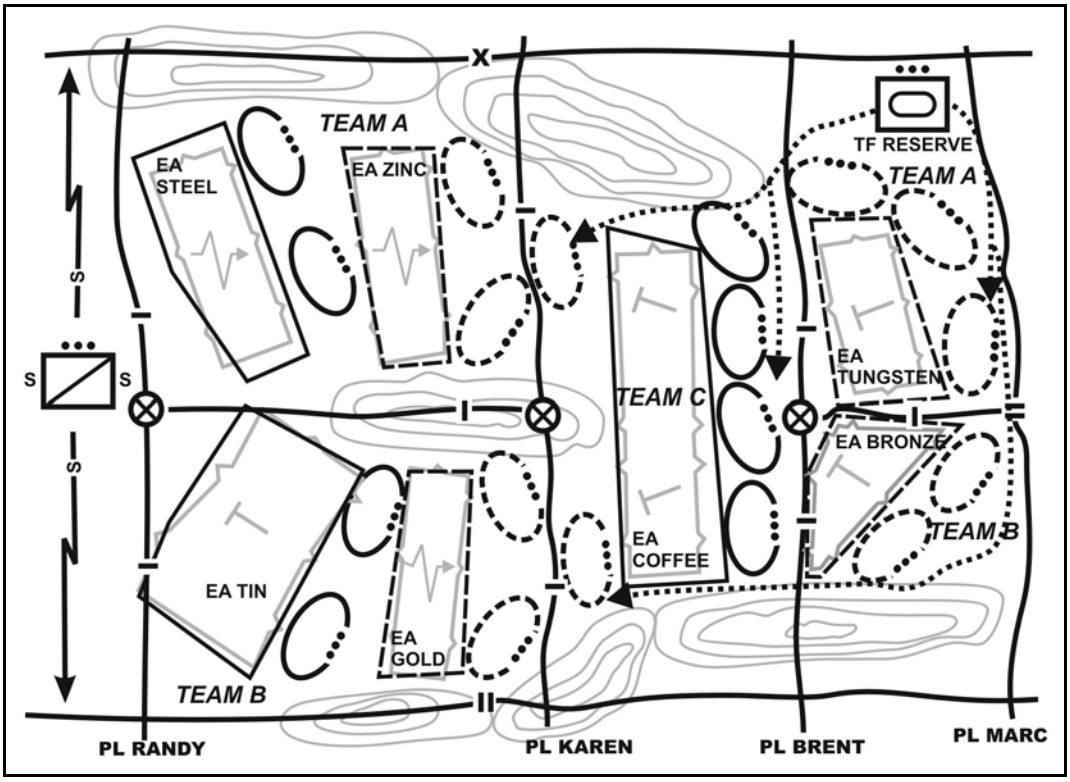


Figure 6-3. Defense in depth.

c. **Planning**. The commander must consider all the factors of METT-TC in order to determine how best to concentrate his efforts and economize forces. Detailed analysis of terrain may be the most important process that the commander and his staff complete. A successful defense relies on a complete understanding of terrain in order to determine likely enemy courses of action and the optimal positioning of the TF assets to counter them. The commander's keys to a successful area defense are--

- Capability to concentrate effects.
- Depth of the defensive area.
- Security.
- Ability to take full advantage of the terrain.
- Flexibility of defensive operations.
- Timely resumption of offensive action.

(1) ***Security***. Security is one of the first planning considerations for the TF. The brigade reconnaissance troop, possibly with augmentation, precedes the maneuver TF in order to clarify the tactical situation. The commander must give the scout platoon specific PIR to allow for an efficient occupation of the area of operations and to position itself for the preparation and execution of the area defense. On a noncontiguous battlefield, the security force must be positioned between the protected force and the known or suspected enemy locations.

(2) ***Maneuver***. In noncontiguous operations, the TF often must defend either on a broad front or in an AO so large that employing units in mutually supporting positions is unrealistic. This requires a judicious effort by the commander and his staff in determining the positioning of maneuver forces. The TF has the unique ability to defend in restricted and severely restricted terrain with infantry while also being able to cover mounted avenues of approach or open areas effectively with tanks and BFVs. During the terrain analysis, the commander and staff must look closely for choke points, intervisibility lines, and reverse slope opportunities in order to take full advantage of the TF's capabilities to mass firepower while providing protection for the infantry.

(a) Once the commander has assigned areas of operations to his maneuver units, he must determine any potential gaps between units. The TF should plan to cover these gaps with reconnaissance assets, aggressive patrolling from the company teams, and local observation posts. The TF must plan local counterattacks to isolate and destroy any enemy that manages to penetrate through a gap in the AO. The commander should also plan to reposition units not in contact to mass the effects of combat power against an attacking enemy.

(b) The need for flexibility through the mobility of mechanized forces requires graphic control measures to assist in command and control during local counterattacks and repositioning of forces. Specified routes, phase lines, attack-by-fire positions, engagement areas, target reference points, and other fire control measures are required for the effective synchronization of maneuver.

(3) ***Positioning the Reserve***. The commander must designate and position the reserve in a location where it can effectively react to several contingency plans. He must consider terrain, trafficability of roads, potential engagement areas, probable points of enemy penetrations, and commitment time. The commander may have a single reserve under TF control, or, if the terrain dictates, the company teams may designate their own reserves. The reserve should be positioned outside the enemy's direct fire range in a covered and concealed position. Information concerning the reserve may be considered EEFI and protected from enemy reconnaissance. The commander may choose to position his reserve forward initially to deceive the enemy or to move the reserve occasionally in order to prevent it from being targeted by enemy indirect fires.

(a) The size of the reserve depends upon the size of the area covered in the defense and the clarity of expected enemy action. The TF may need to defend an AO so large that only local reserves are feasible due to reaction time and the number of potential enemy COAs. The brigade reconnaissance troop, in conjunction with the scout platoon and other ISR assets, should be able to clarify enemy intentions by gathering intelligence on the massing of forces, electronic signals, and troop movement. This intelligence leads to situational understanding and allows the commander to better focus his efforts toward the size and task organization of the reserve.

(b) The TF commander must give specific planning guidance to the reserve to include priority for planning. METT-TC may require that a TF commander designate a reserve that may be called upon to accomplish tasks that include focusing on the MBA and responding to other missions necessary to assist the TF in accomplishing it's mission. The reserve retains flexibility through offensive action. To generate larger ground maneuver reserves, the TF commander will have to redirect company or platoon

committed elements after they have accomplished their initial tasks or when the enemy's defeat frees them for other tasks.

(c) The speed, agility, and digitization at the unit level allow platoons, and sometimes companies, to be committed, withdrawn, redirected, and recommitted during the fight. This use of the reserve requires the best possible situational understanding and a COP that is constantly updated with accurate enemy intelligence. Moving a unit from one area (left to right or front to rear) requires each soldier in the unit to know where he is as well as where both the enemy and friendly forces are located.

(d) Additionally, the movement of ground forces over the distances expected in the expanded battlespace requires time. The time and distance (TDIS) relationship, especially under limited visibility conditions and rough terrain, is a key factor in determining which of the TF units can realistically be considered for a reserve mission that will require a great deal of flexibility in accomplishing multiple missions.

(e) During preparation of the TF defense, the TF reserve may conduct other tasks. The TF commander may initially position his reserve in a forward location to deceive the enemy, obscure subordinate boundaries, or show strength in an area where he intends to accept risk. The reserve may initially serve in the TF's forward security area and provide area security for the logistics sites or unoccupied areas of the TF's AO. However, the TF commander must consider the impact of these types of missions on his reserve force's ability to prepare for its critical role as the reserve during the MBA engagement.

(f) The commander of the TF reserve should also expect to receive specific decision points and triggers for employment on each contingency. This allows the reserve commander to conduct quality rehearsals and to anticipate his commitment as he monitors the fight.

(4) ***Fire Support***. The TF does not possess organic fire support and may have to rely on TF mortars until DS artillery is available. The following are considerations for the fire support plan:

- Allocate initial priority of fires to the forward security force.
- Plan targets along enemy reconnaissance mounted and dismounted avenues of approach.
- Engage approaching enemy formations at vulnerable points along their route of march with indirect fires and CAS, if available.
- Plan the transition of fires to the MBA fight.
- Develop clear triggers to adjust fire support coordination measures and priority of fires.
- Ensure integration of fires in support of obstacle effects.
- Ensure integration of fires with TF counterattack plans and repositioning contingency plans.

(5) ***Engineer Support***. The transition to countermobility and survivability requires detailed planning at the TF level in order to ensure subordinate engineers have adequate time for troop-leading procedures. (Refer to Section VI for a detailed discussion of mobility, countermobility, and survivability planning factors.) The following are key considerations:

- Sight situational obstacles early. Plan multiple locations to support depth and flexibility in the defense. Ensure adequate security for obstacle emplacement systems. Integrate triggers for execution of situational and reserve obstacles in the decision support template.
- Focus the countermobility effort to shape the enemy's maneuver into positions of vulnerability.
- Ensure adequate mobility support for withdrawing security forces, the reserve, and repositioning of MBA forces.
- Ensure integration of survivability priorities for critical systems and units.

(6) ***Air Defense Support***. Key factors the TF must consider for air defense planning include the following:

- Position ADA assets and radars along air avenues of approach to provide early detection and engagement of enemy aircraft; defeat enemy air before it enters the MBA.
- Provide all-round air defense protection to the brigade with mutual supporting and overlapping fires. Weight fires toward likely air avenues of approach.
- Plan primary, alternate, and supplementary firing positions to support defensive positions in depth, delays, and counterattacks.
- Reposition ADA assets to replace lost assets or to mass against significant air threats.
- Ensure adequate security, survivability support, and CSS (especially missile caches) for ADA assets.
- Establish priorities of air defense protection based on the criticality, vulnerability, and recuperability of units and the enemy.
- Expect the enemy to employ heavy air attacks against critical friendly positions (BPs and SPs) to support a breakthrough of the brigade's defense.
- Protect the reserve, which has a critical role in the defense. The enemy will attempt to identify and target it to prevent its decisive employment.
- Protect C2 assets. They are normally stationary and produce a high electronic signature; thus, they are more susceptible to identification and targeting by enemy air attacks. C2 assets normally receive incidental area coverage provided by ADA assets protecting forward maneuver forces.
- Protect logistics units. They are normally stationary and located near roads and therefore are easily identified from the air.

(7) ***Aviation Support***. In defensive operations, the speed and mobility of aviation can help maximize concentration and flexibility. During preparation for defensive operations, aviation units may support the TF commander with aerial reconnaissance and fires.

(a) During the defense, aviation fires can attack deep against high-payoff targets, enemy concentrations, and moving columns, and they can disrupt enemy centers of gravity. Attack helicopter TFs can be employed in depth to attack follow-on echelons before they can move forward to the close battle. Aviation forces may also conduct screening operations and may conduct guard operations of an open flank in conjunction with ground forces.

(b) Attack helicopters routinely support security area operations and mass fires during the MBA fight. Synchronization of aviation assets into the defensive plan is important to ensure aviation assets are capable of massing fires and to prevent fratricide. Detailed air-

ground integration and coordination is necessary to ensure efficient use of aviation assets (see Appendix B). If the TF is assigned aviation assets, it must give careful consideration to EA development and involve the direct fire planning and the supporting aviation unit, through its aviation LNO, in the planning process.

(8) ***Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Support***. Plan for NBC reconnaissance at likely locations for enemy employment of chemical agents. Use smoke to support disengagement or movement of forces.

(9) ***Combat Service Support***. Plan primary and alternate MSRs to support the full depth of the defense. Coordinate MSRs to avoid interfering with maneuver or obstacle plans. Specify routes for contaminated equipment movement. Also, consider the use of prestocked classes of supply (Classes IV and V) within the defense.

(10) ***Health Services Support.*** Health service support considerations for defensive operations include-

- Enemy actions and the maneuver of combat forces complicate forward area patient acquisition.
- Medical personnel are permitted much less time to reach the patient, complete vital EMT, and remove him from the battle site.
- Heaviest patient workloads, including those produced by enemy artillery and NBC weapons, can be expected during the preparation or initial phase of the enemy attack and in the counterattack phase.
- The enemy attack can disrupt ground and air routes and delay evacuation of patients to and from treatment elements.
- The depth and dispersion of the defense create significant time and distance problems for evacuation assets.
- The enemy exercises the initiative early in the operation, which could preclude accurate prediction of initial areas of casualty density. This fact makes the effective integration of air assets into the MEDEVAC plan essential.

(11) ***Civilian Concerns***. Consideration of the higher headquarters rules of engagement (ROE) and limitations is necessary, particularly civilian effects and restrictions on fires and types of weapons. Regardless of whether civilians are removed from the area or protected in their homes, their movement and protection is a concern to the TF. In some cases, the TF may have to arrange for supply, transportation, and medical care for civilians.

(a) Restrictions may exist regarding use of cluster munitions, mines, nonlethal gas, smoke, and even mortar fires. Firing into towns or in the vicinity of refugees may be prohibited. Historical and cultural features may be protected. All of this can influence the design of the defense.

(b) Consider the availability of civilian assets and any limitations on use, including--

- Law enforcement support.
- Movement control.
- Transportation assets.
- Preclusion of area damage.
- Telecommunications security.
- Emergency supplies.

- Medical support.
- Decontamination support.

d. **Preparation**. During preparation, the commander and staff monitor preparatory actions and track the higher and adjacent unit situations and the enemy situation. They must update and refine plans based on additional reconnaissance and updated intelligence information. They conduct much of the preparation phase simultaneously with security operations, continuing even as forward-deployed forces gain contact with the enemy. Throughout the preparation phase, the TF commander, company team commanders, and key staff members should physically inspect preparatory activities. Weapons positioning, obstacle siting, direct and indirect fire plans, CSS operations, and soldiers' knowledge of their missions are all critical checks.

(1) ***Rehearsals***. The TF and subordinate units should conduct rehearsals to practice their defense against multiple enemy COAs. The type of rehearsal executed must consider time, preparation activities, and OPSEC. Rarely will the TF be able to conduct a full-force rehearsal given the tempo of operations and the potentially large size of the AO. It may be better for key leaders to conduct a map or terrain board rehearsal at night in a command post or tent in order to focus their attention during daylight on inspecting preparations and working with subordinate leaders. The rehearsal should cover--

- Reconnaissance and security operations.
- Battle handover and passage of lines.
- MBA engagement.
- Reserve employment options.
- Actions to deal with enemy penetrations, major enemy efforts along areas of risk or flank avenues of approach.
- CSS operations, particularly casualty evacuation, emergency resupply operations, and reorganization.
- Execution of follow-on missions to exploit defensive success.
- Integration of aviation assets, if available.

(2) ***Monitoring Preparation***. As subordinate units position their elements and execute defensive preparations, the TF staff monitors and coordinates their activities and the overall situation.

(a) The S2 closely monitors the enemy situation and focuses on indicators that reveal the enemy's likely time and direction of attack. The staff continually analyzes this assessment to determine the effects on preparation time available. The commander must update his PIR as the situation changes and be prepared to adjust the reconnaissance effort to answer those questions.

(b) The S3 closely monitors the status of rehearsals and updates the plan as needed based on continuously updated intelligence and the status of preparations.

(c) The XO analyzes the status of logistics and maintenance of equipment within the TF to determine any required adjustments to the plan or task organization.

(d) The engineer officer monitors the progress of all engineer efforts within the AO. He continually projects the end state of this effort based on the current and projected work rates. He must identify potential shortfalls early and determine how to shift assets to make up for the shortfall or recommend where to accept risk.

(e) As the enemy closes on the TF's AO, the TF begins final preparations that typically include--

- Final coordination for battle handover and passage of lines.
- Positioning of situational obstacle employment systems.
- Verification of communications status.
- Evacuation of unused Class IV and V (obstacle materiel and ammunition) to prevent capture or loss to enemy action.
- Withdrawal of engineer forces from forward areas.
- Linkup of CS and CSS assets with reserve or other supported combat forces (if not previously accomplished).
- Review of reconnaissance plan to ensure it still meets the commander's PIR.
- Final positioning or repositioning of reconnaissance assets, security forces, and observers.
- Positioning of teams to close lanes in obstacles or execute reserve obstacles.
- Execution of directed, reserve, or situational obstacles.
- Periodic situation updates and issuing of final guidance to subordinates.

This time may also be used to register indirect fire targets with mortars, if not already done. The commander may also conduct a final radio, digital, or even map rehearsal with key leaders.

(3) ***Security Area Actions***. Once security area forces have moved into sector, actions in the security area predominantly focus on reconnaissance, counterreconnaissance, target acquisition, reporting, delay of the enemy main body, and battle handover. The task force's security area forces must integrate their actions with friendly forces forward of them, maintaining information flow and security. The task force's elements may have to execute battle handover with those forward elements and assist them in executing a rearward passage. This is especially likely if the fire elements are assets other than the brigade reconnaissance troop, which must move through the task force area to recover and prepare for another mission. Similarly, the security area forces must coordinate and cross-talk with the teams to their rear. Eventually, they must execute a rearward passage or move to the flanks of the main battle area. On approaches that the enemy does not use, it is usually advantageous to leave elements of the security force forward to preserve observation and access to enemy flanks.

(4) ***Reconnaissance***. The purposes of the reconnaissance effort in the security area are to provide the commander with information to support his decision-making, to provide early warning and reaction time, and to support target acquisition. Guided by the commander's CCIR, the ISR plan, and the fire support plan, reconnaissance assets provide information that includes--

- Location, movement, and destruction of reconnaissance assets.
- Speed, direction, composition, and strength of enemy formations.
- Locations of high-payoff targets such as artillery and rocket units, bridging assets, and C2 nodes.
- Enemy actions at decision points.
- Enemy flanking actions, breaching operations, force concentrations, and employment of combat multipliers.
- Battle damage assessment.
- Movement of follow-on forces.

(a) The staff must integrate the information provided by the security forces with information received from higher and adjacent units, other subordinates, and sources such as JSTARS and UAVs.

(b) The total reconnaissance effort must support the commander's decision-making. In an area defense, the commander's critical decisions normally include--

- Initiation and employment of fires against enemy formations.
- Modifications or adjustments to the defensive plan.
- Execution of situational obstacles.
- Withdrawal of forward security forces.
- Commitment of the reserve, counterattack, or both.

(c) The TF commander establishes the criteria for the battle handover prior to the MBA fight, including where it will pass through, and designates routes and contact points. The handover is normally forward of the FEBA where elements of the reconnaissance unit are effectively overwatched by direct fires of the forward combat elements of the TF. The TF insures coordination is conducted with the reconnaissance unit and the TF's company and or team commanders that will be directly involved in the passing of the reconnaissance elements. This coordination is best established as an SOP to facilitate rapid accomplishment. Coordination normally includes--

- Establishing communications.
- Providing updates on both friendly and enemy situations.
- Coordinating passage.
- Collocating C2.
- Dispatching representatives to contact points and establishing liaison.
- Establishing recognition signals.
- Checking status of obstacles and routes.
- Establishing FS, air defense, and CSS requirements.
- Defining exact locations of contact points, lanes, and other control measures.
- Synchronizing actions to assist the reconnaissance element's rearward passage of lines in or out of contact.

(5) ***Battle Handover***. The battle handover is the transfer of responsibility for the battle from the brigade's security area elements to the TFs. The higher commander who established the security force prescribes criteria for the hand over and designates the location where it will pass through, routes, contact points, and the battle hand over line. The battle hand over line is normally forward of the FEBA where the direct fires of the forward combat elements of the TFs can effectively overwatch the elements of the passing unit. The brigade commander coordinates the battle hand over with the TF commanders. This coordination overlaps with the coordination for the passage of lines, and the two should be conducted simultaneously. Coordination normally includes--

- Establishing communications to include ensuring linkage on the tactical internet and effective data overlap (ensuring elements in different units can see each other in the COP).
- Providing updates on both friendly and enemy situations facilitated through the addition of appropriate command posts and leaders to the message groups on situation reports and updates.

- Coordinating passage, which includes identifying passage points and lanes and exchanging or disseminating digital graphics of these and obstacle overlays. If either unit is not equipped with FBCB2, the coordination requires traditional passage of lines procedures.
- Collocating C2. This is not requird if both units are digital, but it is desirable.
- Dispatching representatives to contact points and establishing liaison. If the passing unit is not FBCB2-equipped, the stationary unit should provide digital escorts to gain limited information of the passing unit.
- Coordinating recognition signals.
- Reporting status of obstacles and routes, including digital overlays.
- Coordinating fire support, air defense, and CSS requirements, giving particular attention to casualty and equipment evacuation requirements.
- Coordinating actions to assist the security force with breaking enemy contact.
- Coordinating and exchanging maneuver, obstacle, and fire plans.
- Coordinating location of and communications means to any stay-behind elements. These must be integrated into fire support coordination measures to establish no-fire areas (NFAs).

(a) Within the TF, the battle handover between the TF security elements and the company teams is far less formal or complicated. Elements must identify rearward passage points and lanes, and the passing elements need to coordinate their movement with the team(s) covering them and through which they are moving. Frequently, the first elements to displace are the maneuver forces that were executing counterreconnaissance, moving to initial defensive positions in the MBA, or acting as the TF or brigade reserve. The scout platoon normally displaces to vantage points on the flanks, moves to establish surveillance on other avenues of approach, or infiltrates to other areas in the TF AO.

(b) When battle handover occurs within the TF, the MBA teams--

- Assist passage of lines and disengagement.
- Gain and maintain contact with enemy forces as battle handover occurs.
- Maintain security.
- Close lanes, execute reserve obstacles, and emplace situational obstacles in the security area as the passing force withdraws.

(6) ***Security Area Engagement***. Engagements in the TF security area are normally limited. Counterreconnaissance forces focus on locating and destroying enemy reconnaissance elements. As the enemy closes into the area, observers initiate indirect fires and execution of situational obstacles. The focal points are normally early warning and identification of the enemy main and supporting efforts in order for the commander to make decisions and position forces.

(7) ***Main Battle Area Engagement***. The defensive battle is decided in the MBA by the actions of the TFs and company teams and their supporting CS and CSS units.

(8) ***Maneuver***. During the MBA engagement, the brigade and TFs shift combat power and priority of fires to defeat the enemy’s attack. This may require--

- Adjustment of subordinates' AOs and missions.
- Repositioning of forces.
- Shifting of the main effort.

- Commitment of the reserve.
- Modification of the original plan.

(a) Forward forces, obstacles, and fires within the MBA normally break the enemy's momentum, reduce his numerical advantage, and force his troops into positions of vulnerability. The TF masses fires (direct and indirect) to destroy attacking enemy forces as they enter the engagement areas.

(b) Depending on the defensive scheme, the TF may conduct delay operations, capitalizing on movement and repeated attacks to defeat the enemy, or it may fight primarily from a single series of positions.

(9) ***Cohesion***. The TF must maintain a cohesive defense if it is to remain viable. This does not mean, however, that the forces must be massed close together. Company teams can maintain cohesion with forces dispersed by maintaining tactical cross-talk among subordinates and continual tracking and digital reporting of the enemy. The staff and commanders must continually assess the enemy's options and movement while identifying means to defeat them. With forces widely dispersed, continual assessment of time, distance, and trafficability factors is essential. To maintain defensive cohesion, company team commanders must keep their movement, positioning, and fires consistent with the commander's defensive scheme.

(10) ***Threats to Task Force Logistics Sites.*** During the MBA fight, protection of logistics sites is necessary to ensure freedom of maneuver and continuity of operations. Because allocating forces against threats to TF logistics sites diverts combat power from the MBA, the commander carefully weighs the need for such diversions against the possible consequences to the overall operation. To make such decisions wisely, the commander requires accurate information to avoid late or inadequate responses and to guard against overreacting to exaggerated reports.

(a) Generally, the TFSA and combat trains rely on positioning, movement, and self-protection for survival. Establish CSS operations in covered and concealed areas away from likely enemy avenues of approach. Establish and maintain perimeter security and early warning OPs, integrating weapons and crews that are in the rear for repair operations. Keep CSS nodes postured to move on very short notice as the security battle begins.

(b) Early warning to CSS units in the rear is critical to their survival in the event of a penetration of the MBA or enemy attack from an unexpected area. CSS plans and rehearsals must address actions to be taken in the event of an attack, including defensive measures, displacement criteria, routes, rally points, and subsequent positions to which to move.

(11) ***Penetrations***. Unless the brigade plan makes other provisions, each TF commander is responsible for controlling enemy advances within his AO. If the enemy penetrates the defense or a penetration appears likely, the TF commander repositions forces or commits his reserve to block the penetration or to reinforce the area where a penetration appears imminent. Simultaneously, the TF commander allocates all indirect fires to support the threatened area. Additionally, he must alert the brigade commander to the threat and advise that he has committed his reserve force (if applicable). The TF commander may have to commit his engineers to assist in containing the penetration or constitute a new reserve from the engineers.

(a) If a penetration threatens the TF, the brigade commander may take several actions to counter the situation. In order of priority, he may do any or all of the following:

- Allocate priority of all available indirect fires, to include CAS, to the threatened unit. This is the most rapid and responsive means of increasing the combat power of the threatened unit.
- Direct or reposition adjacent units to engage enemy forces that are attacking the threatened unit. This may not be possible if adjacent units are already decisively engaged.
- Commit the brigade reserve to reinforce the threatened unit.
- Commit the brigade reserve to block, contain, or destroy the penetrating enemy force.
- Accept penetration of insignificant enemy forces and maintain contact with them as they move deeper into the MBA.

(b) When a penetration occurs, units within the MBA continue to fight, refusing their flanks and engaging the enemy's flanks and rear. The penetrated force must attempt to hold the shoulders of the penetration to prevent the area of penetration from widening and to protect adjacent unit flanks. Adjacent units must take immediate action to secure their exposed flanks, which may include security missions or the establishment of blocking positions. Adjacent units may also need to reposition forces, readjust subordinate AOs and tasks, or commit their reserve. MBA forces attempt to reestablish contact across the area of penetration when possible.

(12) ***Counterattack***. The TF may conduct local counterattacks to restore or preserve defensive integrity. Unless defensive operations have left the TF largely unscathed, the TF usually lacks the ability to conduct a significant counterattack by itself. Within the context of the brigade's operations, a defending TF may execute a counterattack in support of the brigade's defensive posture, as part of a larger force seeking to complete the destruction of the enemy's attack, or as part of a transition to offensive operations.

(13) ***Defense of an Extended Area of Operations***. With situational dominance, air superiority, and access to dynamic obstacles and extensive long-range fire support, the brigade can defend in a greatly enlarged AO. When it does so, the TFs defend as semi-independent entities, aware of their surroundings in great detail and supported with responsive fires and military intelligence (MI) assets but without direct contact with one another and beyond the immediate support of reserve forces. Essentially, these operations are area defenses with exceptionally low force-to-space ratios.

(a) TFs defending in extended AOs base their operations on superior intelligence, tactical agility, long-range fires, and continuous freedom of action. Based on a defensive concept that clearly divides responsibilities between brigade headquarters and the TFs, they employ massed long-range fires and other combat effects to immobilize, disorganize, and destroy enemy forces across a broad area. Close combat in these operations is limited to short, violent counterattacks or direct fire ambushes against damaged, vulnerable fragments of the enemy's force.

(b) TF maneuver plans for defense in an extended AO resemble delays: their commander's position company teams to deny key terrain, to observe the enemy at long range, and to move as necessary to attack the enemy with long-range fires while preserving their freedom of action. Rather than consistently withdrawing under pressure, however, the TF advances, displaces laterally, and withdraws as the enemy loses forces

or gains ground. The TF may use routes, phase lines, areas of operation, and directions of attack to control the movement of company teams and platoons.

(c) The brigade and division staffs must assure that TFs defending in this manner maintain a highly accurate view of the enemy, the environment, and significant civilian factors. Some sensors and their downlinks may be directly assigned to the TFs for these operations. Elements of the brigade reconnaissance troop and division aviation assist the TFs in defending these large areas, assuming responsibility for specified enemy forces as the situation develops. Maintaining contact with the enemy and sustaining observation of every part of the AO is of special importance in a defense of this type. Losses of reconnaissance coverage demand immediate attention.

(d) A defense in an extended AO heavily tasks the TF fire support officer. His FISTs are widely separated and may require simultaneous high-priority support. Additionally, he commonly must coordinate CAS and attack helicopter support. The FSO's workload can be reduced by a concept of fire support that assigns a large part of the coordination responsibility to the brigade FSO, but he is also heavily tasked because of the brigade's expanded area of operations.

(e) The TF's understanding of the terrain, weather, and radio-electronic environment is crucial to its success. To exploit superior situational understanding, the TF must understand the mobility potential of the area and maintain current intelligence that confirms the status of obstacles and routes. The TF must anticipate changing weather and visibility conditions accurately and in time to adjust its dispositions without losing control of the defended area. It must foresee enemy air assaults or strikes against choke points in the depth of the defended area and account for them either by tactical counteraction or by strong air defense of vital points.

(f) Threats to communication also pose special problems for the TF when it defends in an extended AO. Digitized C2 assets are key to defending effectively in a large AO. Brigade and division signal officers must provide redundant radio networks to assure that current intelligence and orders reach the TF, which then distributes them to company teams. The TF must establish priorities for information transfer and command and control to allow it to continue operating if the signal system is impaired. Special means of assuring contact with all friendly forces--retransmission stations, relays, and additional radios--also merit attention in planning for operations in an extremely large AO.

(g) When defending in extended areas, the TF performs land management tasks in many cases that are more typical of brigade operations. Positioning sensors, forward arming and refueling points (FARPs), FA systems, aid stations, CSS collection and supply points, and command posts far enough forward to function may necessitate positioning them in the TF AO. While the TF should not be required to defend such sites, it must follow their movements and clear their occupation of positions.

(h) The CSS effort also demands special planning and nearly flawless execution. The distances between company teams, mortar positions, command posts, and other TF elements adds considerably to the time necessary to move supply, maintenance, and medical support teams. Moving logistical elements over those distances consumes more fuel and parts and calls for CSS leaders who can move quickly and adapt to friendly maneuver while en route across open spaces between units. Planners must provide for emergency resupply of fuel and ammunition, and TF elements must be trained to receive it.

(i) Medical evacuation assumes special importance because of the moral imperative of caring for wounded soldiers and the difficulty inherent in widely dispersed operations. In some cases, defending over extended frontages and depths requires that additional medical augmentation units or elements be positioned with those units inside the TF AO.

(j) Transitioning from defense of an extended area to a smaller AO requires reinforcement of the TF or narrowing of its AO.

(k) Transitioning to the offense depends on defeating the enemy decisively and recognizing that defeat promptly. The brigade commander must provide the planning and warning that precedes these transitions. TF and company team commanders must be ready to confirm sensor indications of enemy condition and to recommend transition to the offense as they sense the enemy's defeat.

6-5. MOBILE DEFENSE

The mobile defense concentrates on the destruction or defeat of the enemy through a decisive counterattack. The focus is on defeating or destroying the enemy by allowing him to advance to a point where he is exposed to a decisive counterattack by the striking force. The striking force is a dedicated force composed of the bulk of the combat power and weighted with the majority of the available combat multipliers. A fixing force shapes the battlefield and the enemy, setting the conditions for the striking force.

a. **Depth**. A mobile defense requires considerable depth in the area of operations in order for the commander to shape the battlefield, causing the enemy to extend his lines of communication and support, expose his flanks, and dissipate his combat power. The terrain must allow the commander to maneuver to attack an enemy flank or rear. A division or corps most frequently conducts a mobile defense, but the brigade is also capable of doing so.

b. **Fixing Force**. TFs participate in a brigade mobile defense as an element in a fixing force conducting a delay or area defense or as an element of a striking force conducting offensive operations. (See Chapter 5 for a discussion on offensive operations.) The TF most often conducts a force-oriented attack against a stationary enemy that the area defense and reserve has stopped. The TF might conduct a force-oriented attack against a moving enemy if the area defense cannot stop the enemy's advance. During these attacks, the TF might act as the security force, main body, or reserve.

6-6. RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

The retrograde is a type of defensive operation that involves organized movement away from the enemy (FM 3-0 and FM 3-90). The enemy may force these operations or a commander may execute them voluntarily. In either case, the higher commander of the force executing the operation must approve the retrograde (FM 3-90.3). Retrograde operations are conducted to improve a tactical situation or to prevent a worse situation from developing. TFs normally conduct retrogrades as part of a larger force but may conduct independent retrogrades as required, such as when conducting an area or point raid. In either case, the TF's higher headquarters must approve the operation.

a. Retrograde operations accomplish the following:
   - Resist, exhaust, and defeat enemy forces.
   - Draw the enemy into an unfavorable situation.

- Avoid contact in undesirable conditions.
- Gain time.
- Disengage a force from battle for use elsewhere in other missions.
- Reposition forces, shorten lines of communication, or conform to movements of other friendly units.

b. The three forms of retrograde operations are--

- ***Delay***. This operation trades space for time and preserves friendly combat power while inflicting maximum damage on the enemy.
- ***Withdrawal***. A withdrawal is a planned, voluntary disengagement from the enemy, which may be conducted with or without enemy pressure.
- ***Retirement***. A retirement is an operation in which a force that is not in contact with the enemy moves to the rear in an organized manner.

NOTE: Maintenance of morale is essential among subordinate leaders and troops in a retrograde operation. Movement to the rear may seem like a defeat or a threat of isolation unless soldiers have confidence in their leaders and know the purpose of the operation and their roles in it.

6-7. DELAY

In a delay, the TF trades space for time and inflicts maximum damage on the enemy while avoiding decisive engagement at the TF level. It is critical that the commander's intent defines what is more important in the mission--time, damage to the enemy, or force protection. Inflicting damage is normally more important than gaining time. The brigade commander establishes risk levels for each delay but maintaining freedom of action and avoiding decisive engagement are ordinarily of ultimate importance. The brigade may execute a delay when it has insufficient combat power to attack or defend or when the higher unit's plan calls for drawing the enemy into an area for a counterattack, as in a mobile defense. Delays gain time to--

- Allow other friendly forces to establish a defense.
- Cover a withdrawing force.
- Protect a friendly force's flank.
- Allow other forces to counterattack.

a. **Forms of Delay**. Based upon the commander's intent and METT-TC, the two types of delay missions are: delay within an area of operations or delay forward of a specific control measure.

(1) ***Delay within an Area of Operations***. The TF may be assigned a mission to delay within an area of operations. The higher commander normally provides guidance regarding intent and desired effect on the enemy, but he minimizes restrictions regarding terrain, time, and coordination with adjacent forces. This form of a delay is normally assigned when force preservation is the highest priority and there is considerable depth to the brigade or division's area of operations.

(2) ***Delay Forward of a Specified Line for a Specified Time***. The TF may be assigned a mission to delay forward of a specific control measure for a specific period of time. This mission is assigned when the brigade or TF must control the enemy's attack and retain specified terrain to achieve some purpose relative to another element, such as setting the conditions for a counterattack, for completion of defensive preparations, or for

the movement of other forces or civilians. The focus of this delay mission is clearly on time, terrain, and enemy destruction. It carries a much higher risk for the TF, with the likelihood of all or part of the unit becoming decisively engaged. The timing of the operation is controlled graphically by a series of phase lines with associated dates and times to define the desired delay-until period.

b. **Culmination of the Delay**. Delay missions usually conclude in one of three ways--a defense, a withdrawal, or a counterattack. Planning options should address all three possibilities.

6-8. DELAY ORGANIZATION

The TF's organization of its forces depends on how the brigade has structured its forces (unless the TF operates independently). The brigade normally organizes into a security force, main body, and reserve, but a wide AO may preclude the use of brigade-controlled security forces and reserves. In this case, the brigade may direct the TF to organize its own security, main body, and reserve forces--the same as if the TF were operating independently. The brigade commander can designate a TF as the security or reserve force for the brigade. If the TF has to establish a security force, it normally uses the scout platoon as a screen force positioned to observe the most likely enemy avenues of approach and to initiate indirect fires to slow and weaken the enemy. Initially, the TF main body usually locates well forward in the AO, then fights from a series of subsequent positions. The reserve force, normally one or two platoons, is used to defeat enemy penetrations or to assist units with breaking contact.

6-9. DELAY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The delay requires close coordination of forces and a clear understanding by subordinates of the scheme of maneuver and commander's intent. The potential for loss of control is very high in delay operations, making cross-talk and coordination between subordinate leaders extremely important. Subordinate initiative is critical, but it must be in the context of close coordination with others. Plans must be flexible, with control measures throughout the AO allowing forces to be maneuvered to address all possible enemy options.

a. **General Considerations**. The commander determines the end state of the delay based on the higher commander's intent and specific parameters of the higher headquarters' delay order. The commander considers the factors of METT-TC, especially the effects of the terrain, to identify advantageous locations from which to engage the enemy throughout the depth of the AO. Specific delay planning considerations the commander and staff must determine include--

- Force array and allocation of combat multipliers, particularly fires and obstacles.
- Where and when to accept decisive engagement.
- Acceptable level of risk for each subordinate force.
- Form of delay and control measures (company teams delay in AO, control by battle positions, or some other method).
- Integration of obstacle intent and EFSTs.
- Likely subsequent mission, transition point(s), and conditions.

b. **TF Order**. The TF order must clearly articulate the parameters of the delay mission. The following is an example of a delay mission issued to a subordinate TF.

> **EXAMPLE:** TF 3-6 delays forward of PL Blue (*space*) until 010400 Sep XX (*time*) to allow the remainder of the brigade to complete defensive preparations (*why*).

c. **Effects of Terrain**. The staff analyzes the effects of terrain and the anticipated enemy situation to identify positions that offer the best opportunity to engage, delay, and inflict damage on the enemy force. As the staff develops delay positions and control measures, it calculates enemy closure rates and compares them to friendly displacement rates between positions. Time and space factors dictate the amount of time subordinate units have to engage the enemy and move before becoming decisively engaged. The staff calculates these factors for each avenue of approach; it develops triggers for displacement to positions in depth.

d. **Enemy Vulnerabilities**. The staff analyzes the terrain and expected enemy situation to identify advantageous locations from which to engage the enemy at existing obstacles such as choke points or urban or complex terrain. It also considers possible locations to plan counterattacks. Situational and event templates must tell the commander and staff where the enemy is likely to be at certain times. This helps them decide where to emplace obstacles, where to mass fires, and if or where decisive engagement is likely or required.

e. **Maneuver Considerations**. The staff considers maneuver actions, fires, obstacles, and the employment of other supporting assets necessary to degrade the enemy's mobility and to support friendly forces' disengagement to subsequent positions. This is especially critical at locations and times when company teams or the entire TF may become decisively engaged with the enemy. As the staff develops and refines the plan, it develops decision points for key actions to include triggers for the employment of fires and situational or reserve obstacles; displacement of subordinate units to subsequent positions; and movement of indirect fire assets, C2 facilities, and CSS units. The staff also selects routes for reinforcements, artillery, CPs, and CSS elements to use and synchronizes their movements with the delaying actions of forward units.

6-10. DELAY SCHEME OF MANEUVER

The scheme of maneuver must allow the TF to dictate the pace of the delay and maintain the initiative. The commander selects positions that allow his forces to inflict maximum damage on the enemy, support their disengagement, and enable their withdrawal. He may choose to delay from successive or alternating delay positions depending on the strength of the teams and the width of the AO.

a. **Areas of Operations**. At brigade level, areas of responsibility are defined by establishing AOs for each TF and developing control measures to ensure adequate control while supporting decentralized freedom of action. The brigade normally assigns deep, parallel AOs to delaying TFs. Each enemy avenue of approach is assigned to only one subordinate unit. Boundaries are used to define TF AOs. When boundaries are drawn, terrain that provides fields of fire and observation into an area is assigned to the unit responsible for that AO or BP. The brigade commander may also use phase lines to

control the timing and movement of delaying units. Doing so constrains TF commanders to delaying on or forward of those lines at least until the specified time. Contact points and other control measures are established to support flank unit coordination. The commander and his staff make provisions for coordinated action along avenues of approach which diverge and pass from one subordinate AO to another.

b. **Control Measures**. The TF organizes its maneuver in a similar fashion. The TF commander may decide to add additional control measures, to include phase lines, battle positions, engagement areas, or attack by fire positions that allow the TF commander to direct the fight more closely and give subordinates a clearer picture of how he envisions fighting the delay.

c. **Delay Positions**. When determining the scheme of maneuver, positions should incorporate as many of the following characteristics as possible:

- Good observation and long-range fields of fire.
- Covered or concealed routes of movement to the rear.
- A road network or areas providing good cross-country trafficability.
- Existing or reinforcing obstacles to the front and flanks.
- Maximized use of highly defensible terrain.

6-11. MAXIMIZING THE USE OF TERRAIN IN A DELAY

Delay positions should be on terrain that controls likely enemy avenues of approach, allows engagements against the enemy where his movement is most canalized, and facilitates maximum delay with minimum forces. Long-range direct fires are highly desirable because they force the enemy to deploy and move carefully and because they reduce the likelihood of unintended decisive engagement of company teams and platoons. Integrating force positioning and movement with terrain, fires, and situational obstacles helps inflict maximum damage on the enemy while allowing friendly freedom of maneuver and disengagement. If not constrained by commander's guidance and rules of engagement, the cover and movement restrictions of urban areas should be extensively exploited if they cannot be readily bypassed.

6-12. FORCING THE ENEMY TO DEPLOY AND MANEUVER IN A DELAY

Engagement at maximum ranges of all weapons systems causes the enemy to take time-consuming measures to deploy, develop the situation, and maneuver to drive the delaying force from its position. An aggressive enemy commander will not deploy if he correctly determines that friendly forces are delaying; he will use his mass and momentum to develop sufficient pressure to cause friendly forces to fall back or become decisively engaged. Therefore, the delay must include the deadly integration of direct and indirect fires and situational obstacles to make the enemy doubt the nature of the friendly mission and leave him no choice but to deploy and maneuver.

6-13. AVOIDING DECISIVE ENGAGEMENT IN A DELAY

A key to a successful delay is to maintain a mobility advantage over the attacking enemy and avoid decisive engagement. The TF seeks to increase its mobility while degrading the enemy's ability to move.

a. The TF improves its mobility by--

- Maintaining contact with the enemy, maintaining reconnaissance and security on flanks, and coordinating with adjacent units to prevent forces from being isolated.
- Reconnoitering routes and BPs.
- Improving routes, bridges, and fording sites between delay positions, as time and resources permit.
- Using indirect fires and obstacles to support disengagement and to cover movement between positions.
- Task-organizing and positioning breaching assets within subordinate formations to breach enemy scatterable mines rapidly.
- Using multiple routes.
- Controlling traffic flow and restricting refugee movements to unused routes.
- Keeping logistical assets uploaded and mobile.
- Caching ammunition on rearward routes and ensuring that units know the locations of these supply points (create a supply point icon in FBCB2). If possible, the supply point should be guarded and prepared for destruction if not used by delaying forces.
- Task-organizing additional medical and equipment evacuation assets to the TFs to increase their ability to disengage and displace rapidly.
- Positioning air defense assets to protect bridges and choke points on rearward routes.

b. The TF degrades the mobility of the enemy by--

- Maintaining continuous pressure on the enemy throughout the area of operations.
- Attacking logistics as well as maneuver and fire support assets.
- Occupying and controlling choke points and key terrain that dominates high-speed avenues of approach.
- Destroying enemy reconnaissance and security forces, which blinds the enemy and causes him to move more cautiously.
- Engaging at maximum ranges.
- Employing a combination of directed situational and reserve obstacles.
- Employing indirect fires, smoke, and CAS, if available.
- Using deception techniques such as dummy positions.

6-14. PARAMETERS OF THE DELAY ORDER

As previously noted in paragraph 6-9, an order for a delay mission must specify certain parameters.

a. **First Parameter**. First, it must direct one of two alternatives--delay throughout the depth of the AO or delay forward of a specific line or area for a specific period of time. A mission of delay within an AO implies that force integrity is a prime consideration. In this case, the TF delays the enemy as long as possible while avoiding decisive engagement. If the delaying force is ordered to hold the enemy forward of a given PL for a specified time, mission accomplishment outweighs preservation of the force's integrity. Such a mission may require the force to defend a given position until ordered to displace.

b. **Second Parameter**. The second parameter the order must specify is acceptable risk. Acceptable risk ranges from accepting decisive engagement in an attempt to hold terrain for a given period of time to avoiding decisive engagement in order to maintain the delaying force's integrity. The depth available for the delay, the time needed by the higher headquarters, and subsequent missions for the delaying force determine the amount of acceptable risk.

b. **Third Parameter**. The order must specify whether the delaying force may use the entire AO or whether it must delay from specific BPs. A delay using the entire AO is preferable, but a delay from specific positions may be required to coordinate two or more units in the delay.

c. **Other Parameters**. The TF order and commander's intent should define for the teams what the scheme of maneuver is, what the priorities are, and how much freedom the subordinate leaders have in maneuvering their forces. The TF commander usually gives a company team commander very little freedom, specifying constraints on maneuver and requirements for coordination, unless the company team is delaying on an avenue of approach that is essentially isolated. The TF commander defines the criteria for disengagement and movement to subsequent positions or areas and a series of battle positions, checkpoints, or phase lines from which, or forward of which, the company team must fight.

6-15. ALTERNATE AND SUBSEQUENT POSITIONS IN A DELAY

In planning, if the commander chooses to delay using battle positions, he can use either alternate positions or subsequent positions. In both techniques, the delaying forces maintain contact with the enemy between delay positions. Table 6-1 shows the advantages and disadvantages of the two techniques.

METHOD OF DELAY	USE WHEN:	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Delay from subsequent positions.	AO is wide. Forces available are not adequate to be positioned in depth.	Reduced fratricide risk. Ease of C2. Repeated rearward passages not required.	Limited depth to the delay positions. Easier to penetrate or isolate units. Less time available to prepare each position. Less flexibility.
Delay from alternate positions.	AO is narrow. Forces are adequate to be positioned in depth.	Allows positioning in depth. Harder for enemy to isolate units. More flexibility.	More difficult C2; requires continuous coordination. Requires passage of lines increasing vulnerability and fratricide potential.

Table 6-1. Comparison of methods of delay.

a. **Delay from Alternate Positions**. In a delay from alternate positions (Figure 6-4, page 6-26), two or more units in a single AO occupy delaying positions in depth. As the

first unit engages the enemy, the second occupies the next position in depth and prepares to assume responsibility for the operation. The first force disengages and passes around or through the second force. It then moves to the next position and prepares to reengage the enemy while the second force takes up the fight. Both the brigade and TF can use this scheme of maneuver. At the brigade level, if the AO is narrow, the brigade employs TFs in depth occupying alternate positions. This enables the brigade to develop a strong delay with forces available to counterattack or assist in the disengagement of the TF in contact. At the TF level, using alternate positions helps maintain pressure on the enemy and helps prevent platoons or company teams from being decisively engaged. A delay from alternate positions is particularly useful on the most dangerous avenues of approach because it offers greater security and depth than a delay from subsequent positions. However, it also poses the highest potential for fratricide and vulnerability as units pass through or near each other.

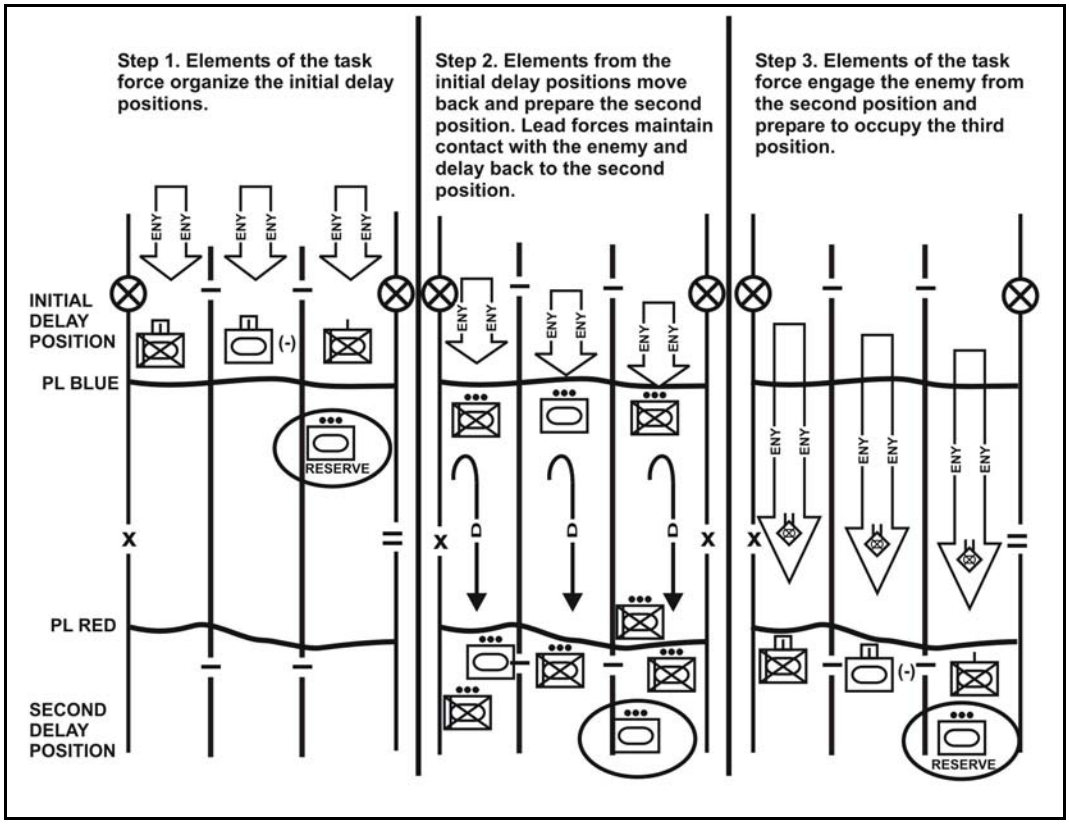


Figure 6-4. Delay from alternating positions.

b. **Delay from Subsequent Positions**. The TF uses a delay from subsequent positions (Figure 6-5) when the assigned AO is so wide that available forces cannot occupy more than a single tier of positions. This is the more common form of a delay operation given the expanded battlespace in which the brigade and TFs normally operate. In a delay from subsequent positions, the majority of forces are arrayed along the same PL or series of BPs. The forward forces delay the enemy from one PL to the next within their assigned AOs. At TF level, this is the least preferred method of delaying since there is a much higher probability of forces becoming isolated or decisively engaged,

particularly if the delay must be maintained over more than one or two subsequent positions. Additionally, the TF has limited ability to maintain pressure on the enemy as it disengages and moves to subsequent positions unless it has been allocated additional (and adequate) indirect fire support.

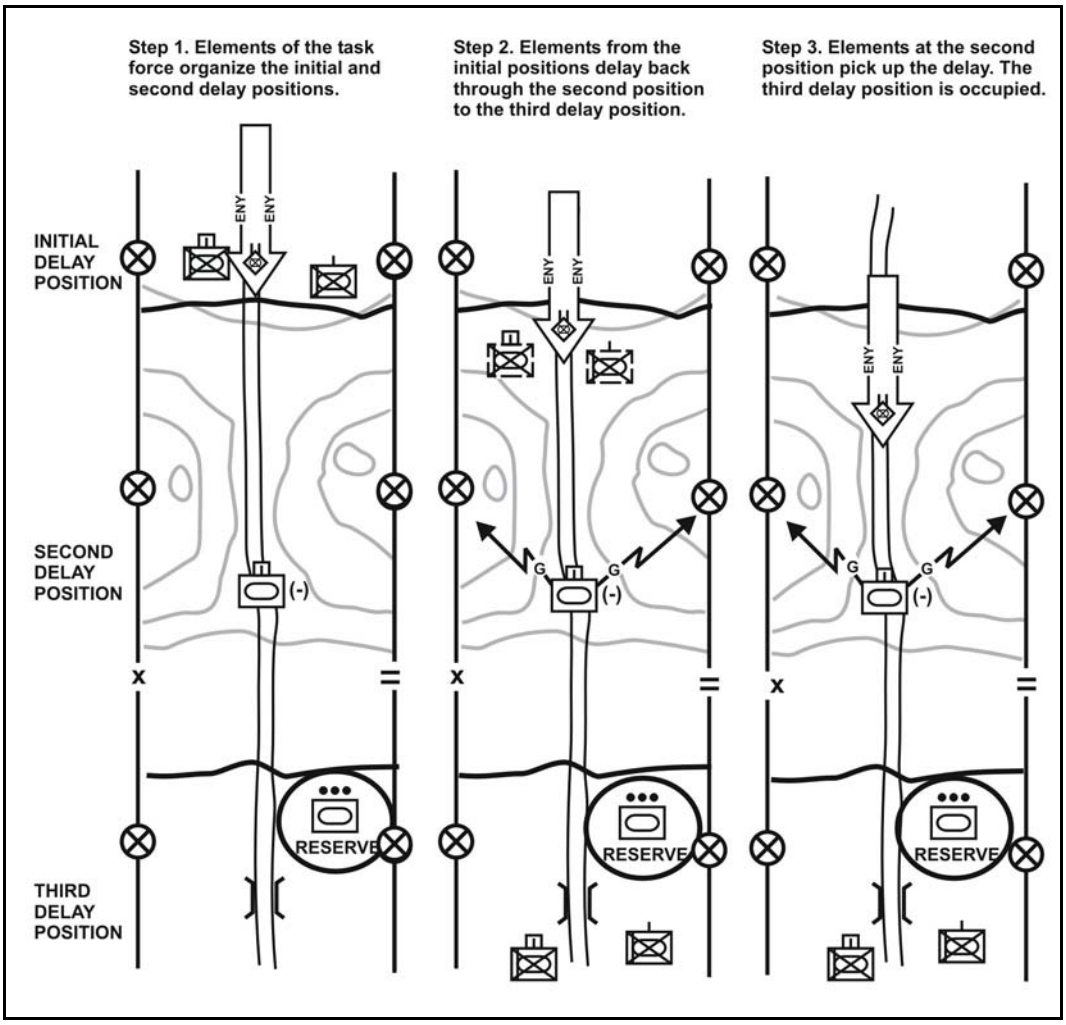


Figure 6-5. Delay from subsequent positions.

6-16. FIRE SUPPORT IN A DELAY

Key considerations for the fire support plan include--

- Attack the enemy throughout the AO.
- Engage the enemy with fires to inflict casualties and disrupt his approach before he reaches friendly delaying positions. Plan final protective fires (FPFs) for each series of delaying positions to support disengagement.
- Mass fires on high-payoff targets and canalizing terrain to limit the momentum of the enemy's attack.
- Ensure fires are tied to obstacles.
- Plan and designate priority targets along routes from one delaying position to the next.

- Mass all available fire support (lethal and nonlethal) to support disengagements.
- Use smoke to screen friendly movements and for deception.

6-17. ENGINEER SUPPORT IN A DELAY

Key considerations for the scheme of engineer operations include the following.

a. When operating over a wide AO, task-organize countermobility assets to teams, decentralizing control and execution.

b. Task-organize mobility assets to teams to support mobility requirements. Consider logistical requirements and support of CSS assets in task-organizing mobility assets.

c. Develop the obstacle plan to support disengagement of delaying forces and to shape the enemy's maneuver to meet the commander's intent. Consider countermobility requirements for all delaying positions throughout the depth of the AO. Integrate SCATMINEs at delay positions to support disengagement and movement to subsequent positions.

d. Consider the impact of the obstacle effort on the movement of friendly forces and future operations. Develop obstacle restrictions, establish lanes and guides, and employ situational or reserve obstacles to support mobility requirements. Provide for closing lanes behind friendly forces with scatterable or hand-emplaced mines.

e. Develop clear criteria for execution of situational and reserve obstacles. Integrate decisions for their execution in the decision support template.

f. Construct survivability positions in depth, as required, to support repositioning forces.

6-18. AIR DEFENSE SUPPORT IN A DELAY

The following are key considerations for the air defense plan.

a. Synchronize the movement and positioning of ADA assets with the delaying forces.

b. Ensure adequate air defense coverage of friendly forces during movements from one delaying position to another. Consider protection along movement routes, choke points, and bridges that friendly forces intend to use.

6-19. NUCLEAR, BIOLOGICAL, AND CHEMICAL SUPPORT IN A DELAY

Brigade planning defines NBC operations in the delay. TFs may coordinate for NBC reconnaissance assets if available in the brigade. Decontamination operations in the delay focus on individual and crew operational decontamination procedures until the conclusion of the operation when thorough decontamination can be accomplished. If smoke generators are available, the TF may employ them for deceiving the enemy, obscuring movement and positions, or obscuring portions of the battlefield to reduce enemy visibility and ease of movement.

6-20. COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT IN A DELAY

CSS for a delay is particularly complex. Maintaining communications within the CSS system, accurately tracking the battle, maintaining personnel accountability, and anticipating support requirements are especially important. Keeping the CSS assets

mobile and supplies uploaded is a key planning consideration. Other considerations include--

a. Providing HSS for the delay may also be difficult since enemy actions and the maneuver of combat forces complicate forward area acquisition of patients.

(1) Planning considerations for HSS should include--

- Positioning ambulances with each of the companies and requesting medical treatment and evacuation support from the FSMC as required.
- Integrating the evacuation routes with the obstacle plan.
- Marking CCPs and evacuation routes for day and night operations.
- Positioning treatment elements forward but to the rear of the maneuvering forces.
- Establishing alternate treatment sites with triggers to reposition.
- Planning for the use of both standard and nonstandard evacuation platforms.
- Rehearsing CASEVAC procedures to include standard and nonstandard platforms.
- Observing time and the means available to remove patients from the battlefield. In either a stable situation or in the advance, time is important only as it affects the physical well being of the wounded. In a delay, time is important. As available time decreases, the use of nonstandard evacuation platforms will increase and companies must be prepared to withdraw, moving their casualties with them.
- Integrating the effective use of air assets into the MEDEVAC plan is essential.

(2) Task-organize additional ambulances and recovery vehicles to the company teams. Request HETs to support rapid evacuation of damaged equipment.

b. Emphasize maintenance support forward with short evacuation times; use all available assets (to include firepower-damaged vehicles) to evacuate damaged vehicles to the rear. Battle damage assessment and repair (BDAR) is a procedure that can be used during a delay to rapidly return disabled equipment to the battlefield by expediently fixing, bypassing, or jury-rigging components. It also includes the use of cannibalization of equipment. It restores the minimum essential combat capabilities necessary to support a specific combat mission or to enable the equipment to self-recover. Crews, company maintenance teams, maintenance support teams, and recovery teams use BDAR. The commander establishes guidelines for BDAR in SOPs and combat orders. However, destruction of equipment may have to occur if time and evacuation capability are limited and the result would be that goods and equipment would become available to the enemy.

c. Synchronize refueling and resupply operations with the scheme of maneuver and the anticipated enemy situation to ensure continuity of support. Increase emergency Class III and V supplies positioned forward.

d. Do not coordinate for throughput too far forward, which might cause assets to be caught in the fight or to add to route congestion. Depending on the situation, this may not apply during the initial preparations for the delay.

e. Plan routes for CSS assets that do not conflict with maneuver elements.

6-21. DELAY PREPARATIONS

Defensive preparations discussed in Section II also apply during the conduct of a delay.

a. **Inspections**. The commander inspects planning and preparations of his subordinate units to ensure--

- Maneuver, fire, and obstacle plans are consistent with his intent.
- Flank coordination between delaying teams is conducted to maintain cohesion and mutual support during the delay.
- Defensive preparations proceed according to established timelines.
- All leaders have a clear understanding of the scheme of maneuver and the commander's intent.

b. **Rehearsals**. When conducting a rehearsal for a delay, key leaders practice the operation against all feasible enemy COAs to promote flexibility of decision-making, plans, and execution. The commander examines each subordinate unit commander's plan as he fights the delay during the rehearsal and pays close attention to the following:

- Direct and indirect fire instructions.
- Timing of movements and delaying actions from one position to the next, with special attention paid to the disengagement criteria.
- Means and methods of disengaging from the enemy and maintaining contact with the enemy as the force moves to subsequent positions.
- Execution of situational and reserve obstacles to include closure of lanes.
- Movement times, routes, and positioning of CS and CSS assets.

The commander also rehearses plans to deal with potential reverses, enemy penetrations, and unanticipated decisive engagement. The rehearsal serves to synchronize further the movement of combat forces, CS, and CSS units. It is especially important to portray movement times and required routes realistically during the rehearsal to identify potential conflicts.

6-22. EXECUTION OF A DELAY

The TF moves key forces and support to prepare for the delay. This initial movement includes movement into the security area and MBA.

a. **Security Area Actions**. Normally, delaying forces occupy the FLOT without a security force to their front. If the brigade can create a security area force for a delay, the TF may position the scout platoon in a screen behind the brigade security force to maintain observation, provide early warning, and continue to observe for indirect fires to continue the disruption and attrition of the attacking enemy. As the enemy closes into and through the security area, the screening forces move back through or around the initial main body positions to subsequent positions that allow them to observe the main battle area and assist in the disengagement and movement of forces to their next positions.

b. **Main Battle Area Engagement**. The TF forces the enemy to deploy and attack by its use of fires and obstacles, massing effects quickly for a short period to inflict the maximum damage on the enemy at the maximum range. To avoid decisive engagement, the TF must disengage before the enemy can breach obstacles or mass effective fire on the delay position. Observers positioned to the flanks in depth continue to observe and shift indirect fires as forces delay to subsequent positions. Company teams may move by bounds within the TF or company team to maintain direct fires on the enemy and cover movement. Short, intense engagements at near maximum range with sustained indirect fires and covering obscurants are the key to successful delay operations.

c. **Controlling the Delay**. The TF commander must closely control the disposition, displacement, and maneuver of his forces in order to maintain the cohesion of the delay operation and keep the entire TF synchronized with the remainder of the brigade. FBCB2 represents a major advantage in force tracking. Given the potential for loss of positive control, it is critical that the commander clearly establish parameters for displacement.

(1) As it executes the delay, the TF and company team commanders must continually assess their situation and requirements to displace with the following considerations:

- What are the size, activity, and location of attacking enemy forces? Are elements of the TF threatened with decisive engagement or bypass?
- What is the status of adjacent units?
- What is the disengagement criteria?
- Are supporting assets, particularly artillery and mortars, postured to support movement? If not, how long will it take them to be ready?
- Are the obstacles supporting the present position still intact and effective?
- Are direct and indirect fires effective?
- How strong is this position in relation to other positions the force might occupy?
- What is the ammunition status?
- Are displacement routes clear?

(2) The TF must always make decisions about displacement and timing in the context of the commander's intent and priority for the delay (for example, is time more important than force preservation, or vice versa?). In many instances, the TF or elements of it must accept decisive engagement to execute the mission and then break contact as the situation permits or in conjunction with another force's counterattack.

d. **Counterattacks**. The TF can rarely execute a substantial counterattack during a delay by itself unless it is part of the larger brigade scheme of maneuver. Generally, counterattacks executed by the TF in its own scheme of maneuver are platoon- to possibly company-size counterattacks to support disengagement of forces or to destroy penetrations. Whenever possible, the brigade executes counterattacks to counter penetrations, to gain a temporary degree of initiative or freedom of action, and to avoid a predictable pattern of operation.

e. **Decisive Engagement**. The TF and company teams avoid becoming decisively engaged except when necessary to prevent the enemy from reaching a specified area too early or when a part of the force must be risked to protect the entire force. If elements of the TF are threatened with decisive engagement or have become decisively engaged, the commander may take actions to support their disengagement. In order of priority, he may do any of the following:

- Allocate priority of all supporting fires to the threatened unit. This is the most rapid and responsive means of increasing the unit's combat power.
- Employ CAS or attack helicopters to suppress the enemy and restore freedom of maneuver to the TF.
- Reinforce the unit. In a delay mission, particularly over a wide AO, the TF may not be able to do this quickly enough with ground maneuver forces.
- Conduct a counterattack to disengage the unit.

Once forces have become decisively engaged, they must not break contact without adequate measures by the TF to prevent the enemy from rapidly pursuing and destroying the force piecemeal.

f. **Terminate the Delay**. A delay mission ends with another planned mission such as a defense, withdrawal, or attack. Ideally, a brigade or TF that has been delaying conducts a rearward passage of lines through the established defense of another friendly force. The TF executes its actions in the context of the brigade's actions. If it defeats the enemy attack during the delay, the brigade may--

- Maintain contact while another force counterattacks.
- Withdraw to perform another mission.
- Transition to the offense.

In all cases, the commander must plan for the expected outcome of the delay based on the situation and the higher commander's plan.

6-23. WITHDRAWAL

Withdrawal is a planned operation in which a force in contact disengages from an enemy force. Withdrawals may or may not be conducted under enemy pressure. The two types of withdrawals are assisted and unassisted.

a. **Assisted**. The assisting force occupies positions to the rear of the withdrawing unit and prepares to accept control of the situation. It can also assist the withdrawing unit with route reconnaissance, route maintenance, fire support, and CSS. Both forces closely coordinate the withdrawal. After coordination, the withdrawing unit delays to a battle handover line, conducts a passage of lines, and moves to its final destination.

b. **Unassisted**. The withdrawing unit establishes routes and develops plans for the withdrawal, then establishes a security force as the rear guard while the main body withdraws. CSS and CS elements normally withdraw first, followed by combat forces. To deceive the enemy as to the friendly movement, the brigade or TF may establish a detachment left in contact if withdrawing under enemy pressure. As the unit withdraws, the detachment left in contact disengages from the enemy and follows the main body to its final destination.

6-24. WITHDRAWAL ORGANIZATION

As with the delay, how the TF structures its force is a function of how the brigade organizes. The brigade normally organizes into a security force, main body, and reserve. It may elect to use a single TF or elements of a TF as the security or reserve force. It may also organize a detachment left in contact or stay-behind forces, if required by the enemy situation. If operating independently, the TF organizes itself in the same manner. FBCB2 is a major asset in withdrawals, and the TF should plan for its continuous operations before withdrawals.

a. **Security Force**. The security force maintains contact with the enemy until ordered to disengage or until another force takes over the task. It simulates the continued presence of the main body, which requires additional allocation of combat multipliers beyond that normally allocated to a force of its size. When withdrawing under enemy pressure, the security force establishes or operates as a detachment left in contact to provide a way to break contact from the enemy sequentially. When conducting the

withdrawal without enemy pressure, the security force acts as a rear guard because the most probable threat is a pursuing enemy.

b. **Detachment Left In Contact**. The detachment left in contact is an element that is left in contact as part of the previously designated (usually rear) security force while the main body conducts its withdrawal. Its purpose is to remain behind to deceive the enemy into believing the brigade or TF is still in position while the majority of the unit withdraws. The detachment left in contact should be one of the strongest of the subordinate units with the most capable leadership. It will be the unit under the greatest pressure, and the success of the withdrawal often depends on its effectiveness. The commander must establish specific instructions about what to do if the enemy attacks and when and under what circumstances to delay or withdraw. The brigade organizes a detachment left in contact in one of three ways (Figure 6-6).

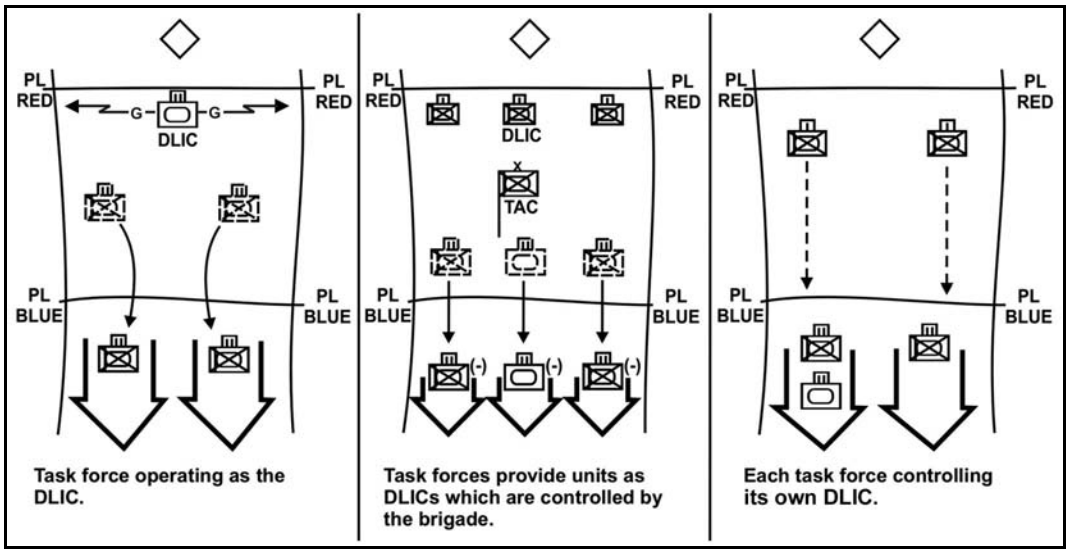


Figure 6-6. Methods for organizing the detachment left in contact.

(1) ***Single Task Force***. A single TF operates as the detachment left in contact. This is the most effective option since it provides for effective task organization and C2.

(2) ***DLIC Element Formed from Each Task Force***. Each TF provides forces for the detachment-left-in-contact mission. The resulting DLIC element then operates under the brigade's control. This is the least desirable option since it complicates C2 and task organization and requires significant changes to the communications architecture. The brigade most commonly uses this option when the subordinate TFs have lost significant portions of their command and control capabilities.

(3) ***Task Force Control of Separate DLICs***. Each TF establishes and controls its individual detachment left in contact. The brigade uses this option when it is operating over a wider area or one with multiple corridors in the withdrawal AO. This method allows for effective dispersion of forces while maintaining standard C2 relationships.

c. **Company Team DLIC**. When the TF is the DLIC or has its own DLIC (subparagraphs 1 and 3 above), it normally gives the mission to a company team. Again, the company team left in contact should be the most capable of the subordinate units. The TF should establish an advance guard on its route of movement. It may designate a

company team or the scout platoon reinforced with tanks, infantry, and mortars as the advance guard. The TF should task-organize both the DLIC and the advance guard with engineers, assigning mobility assets to the advance guard and obstacle and mobility assets to the DLIC. The TF main body consists of the remaining company teams, command posts, CSS assets, remaining engineers, and the mortars if they are not task-organized to support either the DLIC or the advance guard. The TF may designate a reserve platoon from the single company team in the main body. To create flank security, it uses the scout platoon, engineers, or elements of the main body team.

6-25. WITHDRAWAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Because the force is most vulnerable if the enemy attacks, the commander and staff normally plan for a withdrawal under enemy pressure. They also develop contingency plans for a withdrawal without enemy pressure.

a. **Planning Considerations**. During planning, the commander and staff specifically consider the following:

- Disengagement criteria (time, friendly situation, enemy situation).
- Plan for a deliberate break in contact from the enemy.
- Plan for deception to conceal the withdrawal for as long as possible.
- Rapid displacement of the main body, safeguarded from enemy interference.
- Selection and protection of withdrawal routes and alternates.
- Siting of obstacles behind the DLIC to complicate pursuit.

b. **Commander's Intent**. The commander develops his vision of the battle based on withdrawing under enemy pressure. He must determine the composition and strength of the security force, main body, and reserve. The commander must clearly define how he intends to deceive the enemy as to the execution of the withdrawal, how he intends to disengage from the enemy (use of maneuver, fires, and obstacles), and the final end state of the operation in terms of time, location, and disposition of forces.

6-26. WITHDRAWAL SCHEME OF MANEUVER

A withdrawal may be assisted or unassisted and may take place with or without enemy pressure. The plan considers which of the variations the TF faces based on the higher headquarters' order and the enemy situation.

a. **Assisted Withdrawal**. In an assisted withdrawal, the staff coordinates the following with the assisting force:

- Actions of the assisting security force that the TF will pass through or around.
- Reconnaissance of withdrawal routes.
- Designation of forces to secure choke points or key terrain along the withdrawal routes.
- Designation of elements to assist in movement control, such as traffic control points.
- Designation of required combat, CS, and CSS to assist the withdrawing TF in disengaging from the enemy.

b. **Unassisted Withdrawal**. In an unassisted withdrawal, the TF establishes its own security and disengages itself from the enemy. It reconnoiters and secures routes that it uses in its rearward movement while sustaining itself during the withdrawal.

c. **Withdrawal under Enemy Pressure**. In a withdrawal under enemy pressure, all units other than the rear guard or DLIC withdraw simultaneously when available routes allow. Several factors influence the decision to withdraw simultaneously:

- Subsequent missions.
- Availability of transportation assets and routes.
- Disposition of friendly and enemy forces.
- Level and nature of enemy pressure.
- Degree of urgency associated with the withdrawal.

(1) ***Transition***. The element that will be the DLIC or rear guard must transition to cover the TF's AO. Simultaneously, the TF must prepare its CSS assets and the remainder of the force to begin a rapid withdrawal to the rear. The TF should seek to move on two routes to gain speed and shorten formations. Using more than two routes exceeds the ability of the TF to maintain security. Often, only a single route will be available.

(2) ***Breaking Contact***. The TF commander essentially has two options for breaking contact--break contact using deception and stealth or break contact quickly and violently under the cover of supporting fires reinforced by obstacles to delay pursuit. He bases his choice on the factors of METT-TC.

d. **Withdrawal without Enemy Pressure**. When conducting a withdrawal without enemy pressure, the commander can focus the plan on the best method to displace forces rapidly. He has the option of taking calculated risks that increase his force's displacement capabilities. He may order the main body to conduct a tactical road march instead of moving in tactical formations, or he may move on as many routes as are available with reduced security in order to gain speed.

6-27. WITHDRAWAL PREPARATION

The commander prepares the TF for the withdrawal through inspections and rehearsals in the same fashion as discussed with other defensive operations. Inspections for this mission focus on subordinate unit preparations to ensure a clear understanding of the scheme of maneuver and commander's intent. During an assisted withdrawal, the commander ensures adequate coordination for battle handover and passage of lines. The focus of the rehearsal for the withdrawal is actions to maintain security, disengagement from the enemy, and the movement of forces. Key leaders or liaisons from the assisting force should attend the rehearsal. The commander ensures control measures, including fire support coordination measures, fully support the withdrawal. Leaders rehearse the plan against the full range of possible enemy actions. They rehearse contingencies for reverting to a delay, committing the reserve, and reacting to enemy interdiction of movement routes.

6-28. WITHDRAWAL EXECUTION

Execution of the TF withdrawal essentially follows this pattern:

- Task-organizing and positioning security and deception forces.
- Reconnoitering withdrawal routes and subsequent positions.
- Preparing obstacles to support the DLIC and withdrawal.
- Preparing wounded soldiers and damaged equipment and nonessential supplies for movement.

- Moving nonessential CS and CSS units to the rear.
- Positioning MPs and other assets for traffic control.
- Initiating movement, leading with forward security forces.
- DLIC's breaking of contact and movement as a rear guard.

6-29. CONCEALING THE WITHDRAWAL

The first priority is to conceal the withdrawal from the enemy. As the brigade or TF initiates the initial movement of forces, it must take measures to deceive the enemy and to maintain OPSEC. The following actions assist in maintaining OPSEC:

- Maintenance of the defensive pattern of the whole force across the AO, simulated by the DLIC.
- Maintenance of communication and information security.
- Avoidance of establishing patterns of movement that may indicate friendly intentions.
- Establishment of security focused on destroying enemy reconnaissance forces.
- Use of multiple withdrawal routes.
- Movement during limited visibility and along covered and concealed routes.

6-30. DISENGAGEMENT IN A WITHDRAWAL

The security force remains in position and maintains a deception while the main body moves as rapidly as possible rearward to intermediate or final positions. After the main body withdraws a safe distance, the commander orders the security force to begin its rearward movement. Once the security force begins moving, it assumes the duties of a rear guard. The security element must balance security and deception with speed as it disengages. It maintains tactical movement and security techniques until it is clear that the enemy is not pursuing and contact has been broken; it then withdraws as rapidly as possible. The main body moves rapidly on multiple routes to designated positions. It may occupy a series of intermediate positions before completing the withdrawal. CS and CSS units, along with their convoy escorts, usually move first and precede combat units in the movement formation. Commanders enforce the disciplined use of routes during the withdrawal. Despite confusion and enemy pressure, subordinate units must follow specified routes and movement times.

6-31. ACTIONS ON CONTACT IN A WITHDRAWAL

Security forces counter any enemy attempts to disrupt the withdrawal or pursue the brigade or TF. If the security force and the reserve cannot prevent the enemy from closing on the main body, the commander commits some or all of the main body to prevent the enemy from interfering further with the withdrawal. The main body delays, attacks, or defends as required by the situation. In this event, the withdrawal resumes at the earliest possible time. If the enemy blocks movement to the rear, friendly forces shift to alternate routes and bypass the interdicted area. Alternatively, they may attack through the enemy.

6-32. TERMINATING THE WITHDRAWAL

Once the brigade or TF successfully disengages from the enemy, it normally has the following options:

- Rejoin the overall defense.
- Transition into a retirement.
- Continue moving away from the enemy and toward its next mission area.

The higher headquarters defines the next mission. Follow-on missions are normally planned as the withdrawal is being planned or executed.

6-33. RETIREMENT

A retirement is a retrograde operation in which a force that is not in contact with the enemy moves to the rear in an organized manner. The TF conducts a retirement as part of the brigade to reposition for future operations.

a. **Organization**. The brigade normally organizes into security elements and a main body. A subordinate TF may serve either as a security element or as a part of the main body. The TF normally organizes itself with security, main body, and reserve elements, depending on the situation and where the TF is in the movement scheme. The formation and number of columns employed depend on the number of available routes and the potential for enemy interference. The commander typically wants to move his major elements to the rear simultaneously.

b. **Planning Considerations**. The commander and staff develop a movement plan based on the terrain, friendly situation and commander's guidance, and enemy situation. They develop the movement formation and order of movement to balance the need for security and speed. Security forces protect the main body from surprise, harassment, or attack by any pursuing enemy forces. Normally, each march column maintains an advance guard, rear guard, and flank security, depending on the situation with adjacent friendly forces and the likelihood of enemy interference. The main body may organize into an approach march or tactical road march if speed is most important and the need for security is low.

c. **Preparation**. During preparations, brigade and TF units conduct rehearsals and prepare for movement. Units maintain OPSEC and security operations and dispatch advance parties and quartering parties as required.

d. **Execution**. During a retirement, the brigade and its TFs normally move to assembly areas to prepare for future operations. TFs move in accordance with established movement times and routes. Strict adherence to the movement plan is essential to avoid congestion. The staff closely supervises the execution of the movement plan. CSS and CS units usually move to the rear first.

Section III. DEFENSIVE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This section contains planning considerations applicable for defensive operations.

6-34. DEFENSIVE PLANNING

Planning a defensive operation is a complex effort requiring detailed planning and extensive coordination. In the defense, synchronizing the effects of the TF combat and supporting systems allows a commander to apply overwhelming combat power against selected advancing enemy forces to unhinge the enemy commander's plan and destroy his combined arms team. All defensive operations are a mix of static and dynamic actions. As an operation evolves, the commander knows he will probably need to shift his decisive and shaping operations to press the fight and keep the enemy off balance.

a. **Commander's Vision**. The first step is the expression of the commander's visualization of anticipated enemy actions integrated with the staff's IPB. The TF IPB and the brigade IPB should not differ significantly, giving the TF commander and staff a clear understanding of how the brigade commander envisions the enemy will fight and his plan for the operation. From that, the TF commander and staff refine the IPB to focus on the details of the operation in the TF AO. The brigade commander normally defines where and how the brigade will defeat or destroy the enemy. The TF commander defines how he envisions the TF will execute its portion of the brigade fight.

b. **How and Where to Defeat the Enemy**. The commander and staff base their determination of how and where to defeat the enemy on where they believe the enemy will go, the terrain, and the forces available. The brigade commander may define a defeat mechanism that includes the use of single or multiple counterattacks to achieve success. The TF commander and staff analyze their unit's role in the brigade fight and determine how to achieve success. In an area defense, the TF usually achieves success by massing the cumulative effects of obstacles and fires to defeat the enemy forward of a designated area, often in conjunction with a brigade counterattack. In a delay operation, the TF achieves success by combining maneuver, fires, obstacles, and avoidance of decisive engagement until conditions are right to achieve the desired effect of gaining time or shaping the battlefield for a higher echelon counterattack.

c. **Forces and Assets Available**. The commander and staff analyze the forces and assets available, with particular attention to the obstacle assets and fire support allocated by the brigade. The staff must define the engineer and fire support allocation in terms of capability. For example, they should define engineer capability in terms of the number of obstacles of a specific effect engineers can emplace in the time available. Fire support analysis should include the number of targets to be engaged, at what point in the battle they should be engaged, and with what expected result.

d. **Effects**. With a definitive understanding of the assets available, the commander and staff determine what effects forces, fires, and obstacles must achieve on enemy formations (by avenue of approach) and how these effects will support the brigade's and TF's defeat mechanism. They define the task(s) and purpose for subordinate units and establish priorities for CS and CSS. They develop obstacle and fire support plans concurrently with the defensive force array, again defining a task and purpose for each obstacle and target in keeping with the commander's stated EFSTs and intended obstacle effects. The desired end state is a plan that defines how the commander intends to mass the effects of direct and indirect fires with obstacles and use of terrain to shape the battlefield and defeat or destroy the enemy.

6-35. INTELLIGENCE PREPARATION OF THE BATTLEFIELD

As with all tactical planning, IPB is a critical part of defensive planning. It helps the commander to define where to concentrate combat power, where to accept risk, and where to plan potential decisive actions. To aid in the development of a flexible defensive plan, the IPB must present all feasible enemy courses of action. The essential areas of focus are--

- Analyze terrain.
- Determine enemy force size and likely COAs with associated decision points.
- Determine enemy vulnerabilities.

a. **Analyze Terrain**. The staff determines ground and air mobility corridors and avenues of approach to determine where the enemy can maneuver to reach his likely objectives and to identify limitations on friendly maneuver and positioning. Identification of terrain that creates potential enemy vulnerabilities and opportunities for friendly attack, such as choke points, is critical. The brigade engineer can assist the TF staff's terrain analysis by providing terrain analysis products utilizing the DTSS, which can help in identifying critical terrain as well as in positioning weapons systems and intelligence assets. Once they receive their area of operation for reconnaissance or preparation, subordinate units can conduct their own terrain analysis using physical reconnaissance and the line-of-sight analysis function in FBCB2. The terrain analysis must achieve a level of fidelity that allows for effective positioning of direct fire weapons systems and observers. It must identify intervisibility lines, fields of fire, and dead spaces and integrate the effects of weather. The brigade staff can assist the TF staff by supplying weather impact on trafficability, visibility, and systems operations through data generated by the integrated meteorological system (IMETS) at division. The result of the terrain analysis should be a modified combined obstacle overlay (MCOO) and identification of defensible areas. The staff should transmit results of the analysis digitally to subordinate units. When it has analyzed the TF's assigned AO, the staff should expand its analysis to adjacent AOs and areas forward and to the rear of the assigned AOs, in which the TF may operate as the brigade operation progresses.

b. **Determine Enemy Force Size, Likely COAs, and Decision Points**. The staff determines the size enemy force that each avenue of approach and mobility corridor can support. The expected size of the enemy force drives determination of friendly force allocation, fires, and obstacle effort. It also assists the commander and staff in understanding how the enemy will utilize his forces and the terrain. The enemy COAs developed must be feasible and reflect the enemy's flexibility and true potential. All COAs should define the following:

- Likely enemy objectives.
- Enemy composition, disposition, and strength.
- Schemes of maneuver, to include routes, formations, locations and times the enemy may change formations, possible maneuver options available to the enemy, and key decision points.
- Time and distance factors for the enemy's maneuver through the area of operation.
- Likely employment of all enemy combat multipliers including artillery, air defense, obstacles, chemical strikes, dynamic obstacles, and attack aircraft.
- Likely use of all enemy reconnaissance assets and organizations, to include likely reconnaissance objectives, reconnaissance avenues of approach, times to expect enemy reconnaissance, and likely locations of enemy observers and observation posts.
- Identification and likely locations of enemy high-value targets such as artillery formations, reserves, and C2 nodes.
- Likely locations, compositions, strengths, employment options, and time and distance factors for enemy reserves and follow-on forces.

- Locations of enemy decision points that determine selection of a specific course of action.
- Likely breach sites and points of penetration.

The staff should graphically portray the results of this IPB step on a situation template with a COA statement and appropriate notes. The S2 and staff use this to develop the initial intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance OPORD that initiates reconnaissance and security operations. As planning progresses, they must update the ISR OPORD, to include fire support operations (see Chapter 4, ISR Operations). The staff should distribute all products digitally to the entire staff and subordinate units to support parallel planning.

c. **Determine Enemy Vulnerabilities**. The staff identifies potential enemy vulnerabilities based on the enemy's tactics, friendly and enemy capabilities, the terrain, and the weather. Seeking to engage the enemy where the terrain puts him at a disadvantage, the staff identifies--

- Restricted terrain that may slow the enemy's attack, cause a separation of forces, create difficulties in command and control, or force the enemy to conduct defile drills (for example, narrow valleys, passes, or urban areas).
- Choke points or natural obstacles that may cause a loss of momentum, a potential fragmenting of forces, or a vulnerable concentration of forces (for example, rivers and canals).
- Terrain that canalizes enemy formations into areas that provide defending forces good fields of fire, observation, and flanking fires.
- Areas dominated by key or defensible terrain that allows massing of fires.

To be successful at providing IPB products to support the commander and subordinate units, the entire staff must participate as a whole. They must be knowledgeable in friendly and enemy capabilities and terrain analysis and able to execute the process rapidly. The results must be detailed, legible, and disseminated quickly to support planning at all echelons.

6-36. RESERVE

The reserve is a force withheld from action to be committed at a decisive moment. It provides the commander with the flexibility to exploit success or deal with a tactical setback and the flexibility to respond in situations where there is a great deal of uncertainty about the enemy. Normally, the TF commander can only allocate a platoon as a reserve. This decreases the ability of the TF to respond to tactical emergencies or to exploit success. It increases the significance of the brigade's reserve element, which may be a company team or a two-company TF operating over an extended area. On the modern battlefield, situational obstacles, fires, CAS, and attack aviation will increasingly be used to augment reserve forces, usually at the brigade level.

a. The choice of a force designated to be a reserve depends upon the factors of METT-TC. Generally, a tank platoon is ideal because of its mobility, firepower, and limited obstacle breaching capability. In close terrain against an enemy with dismounted infantry, an infantry force may be best suited. In compartmented or restricted terrain against a mechanized enemy, mobile Javelin teams can be an effective reserve force.

b. The reserve's likely tasks are issued as planning priorities and may include one or more of the following:

- Counterattack locally.
- Defeat enemy air assaults
- Block enemy penetrations.
- Reinforce a committed team.
- Protect rear area operations.
- Secure high-value assets.

c. During defensive preparations, the TF commander may employ his reserve in other tasks, such as security operations or to assist security of TF logistics sites. The commander must balance these uses with the need to protect his reserve and with the reserve commander's requirement to conduct troop-leading procedures, coordination, and reconnaissance.

d. The commander and staff must determine where and under what conditions the reserve force is likely to be employed in order to position it effectively and give it appropriate planning priorities. The reserve force commander must analyze his assigned planning priorities, conduct the coordination with units that will be affected by his maneuver and commitment, and provide information to the commander and staff on routes and employment times to designated critical points on the battlefield.

Section IV. SEQUENCE OF THE DEFENSE

The TF may assume a defensive mission following an attack of its own or in anticipation of an enemy attack. The following general sequence of operations applies to planning and executing all defensive operations: occupation and establishment of security, preparation and continued security operations, security area engagement, main battle engagement, and follow-on missions.

6-37. OCCUPATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURITY

Normally, the brigade has established some form of security before the TF moves into the area. However, the TF must still provide for its own security, especially on expanded or complex terrain. If transitioning from an offensive operation, the brigade and TFs establish the security area well beyond where the main battle area is desired in order to prevent the enemy from observing and interrupting defensive preparations and identifying unit positions. If they cannot push the security area forward to achieve this, the brigade and its TFs may have to hold their positions initially as they transition and then withdraw units to the defensive main battle area, establishing a security force in the process.

a. **Movement into Unsecured AO**. If the TF is moving into an unsecured AO, it may lead with the scout platoon, possibly reinforced with tanks or infantry elements and mortars. Depending on the situation, the TF may send a company team to secure the area. The mission of the security force is to clear the area, check for contaminated areas and obstacles, and establish security for the TF main body. After clearing the TF's logistics sites and the area where the company teams will be positioned, the security force should position itself to--

- Prevent enemy observation of defensive positions.
- Defeat infiltrating reconnaissance forces.
- Prevent the enemy from delivering direct fires into the TF defenses.
- Provide early warning of the enemy's approach.

b. **Positioning of Forces**. The positioning of the TF security elements must be integrated into the security operations of the brigade and adjacent TFs. In contiguous or linear defenses, the brigade commander normally organizes and defines the security area forward of the FEBA, assigning the TFs AOs of the battlefield to prevent gaps in the brigade security. The key is to integrate operations at the brigade level and again at the TF level, using all available resources to execute security operations.

c. **Leaders' Reconnaissance**. When feasible, the commander and subordinate leaders conduct a reconnaissance of the AO to develop most of the plan based on their view of the actual terrain. The commander and staff develop a plan for the leaders' reconnaissance that includes provisions for security, leaders and key staff members required to participate, designation of a recorder, areas to be reconnoitered, and time allocated for the reconnaissance. When available, the commander may use aviation assets to conduct the leaders' reconnaissance.

6-38. PREPARATION AND CONTINUED SECURITY OPERATIONS

Preparation of the defense includes planning and plan refinement, positioning of forces, constructing obstacles, planning and synchronizing fires, positioning logistics, and conducting inspections and rehearsals. Throughout the preparation phase, security operations must continue without interruption. Security forces may be assigned any combination of screen, guard, and area security missions. The scout platoon may be positioned to screen and provide early warning along most likely enemy avenues of approach, reinforced in depth with sections or platoons from the company teams.

a. **Security**. Security is a consideration throughout the area of operations. The TF must array security forces in depth to provide protection and to reduce the potential for enemy infiltration. It must also secure the main battle area to prevent enemy reconnaissance, reduction of obstacles, targeting of friendly positions, and other disruptive actions. Company teams must secure obstacles, battle positions, and hide positions. Elements in the TF must provide their own security, augmented by vehicles that are being repaired. With extended lines of communication, the TF may also secure logistical elements moving forward from the BSA to support the TF.

b. **Dispersion**. Forces should be widely dispersed and hidden to reduce vulnerability and aid in OPSEC.

c. **Integration**. Integrate reconnaissance and ground maneuver units into the security forces. Utilize reconnaissance forces primarily to locate enemy elements and attack them with indirect fires but not to engage in direct fire attack except in self-defense. Clearly establish the C2 headquarters and communication architecture for the security force. (This can be one of the most challenging missions in terms of tactical internet management.)

6-39. SECURITY AREA ENGAGEMENT

The TF normally does not have a significant security area engagement as this is largely the domain of brigade for shaping the battlefield and setting favorable conditions for the close fight. The TF may execute some engagement tasks in the security area to support its own or higher's defensive scheme. These tasks may include--

a. **Execution of Planned Indirect Fires**. The TF's planned indirect fires usually consist of security force elements' or a fire support team's (FIST's) execution of one or

two indirect fire targets on a primary enemy avenue of approach. This may be in support of the higher headquarters' scheme of fires since the brigade usually controls artillery assets throughout most of the engagement.

b. **Execution of Situational Obstacles**. The TF may be tasked by higher or have integrated into its own defensive scheme the use of rapidly emplaced situational obstacles to execute in the security area. These obstacles serve to force premature enemy deployment, slowing the enemy to allow for more effective engagement with indirect fires while forcing premature expenditure of enemy engineer assets. These obstacles are usually planned and triggered relative to specific enemy attack options and are related to accomplishing a specific EFST. Maneuver forces may be employed forward to cover them with direct fires and then withdraw to positions in the main battle area.

c. **Execution of Delay Operations through the Security Area and into the MBA**. The TF may support its own or higher's scheme of maneuver by fighting a delay through the depth of the security area and into the main battle area. The purpose may be to take advantage of restricted avenues of approach, to set the conditions for a counterattack, or to avoid a decisive engagement until favorable conditions have been set.

d. **Battle Handover**. The TF may assume control of the FEBA fight from the security force as it withdraws. Transferring responsibility from the security force to the TF on the FEBA requires firm, clear arrangements for assuming command of the action, for coordinating direct and indirect fires, for the security force's rearward passage of lines, for closing lanes in obstacles, and for detailed movement planning that clears the security force out of the TF AO with minimal interference with the defense.

e. **Transition**. As security area engagements transition into the main battle area, security area forces withdraw to initial MBA or reserve positions. Some elements may maneuver to the flanks to maintain surveillance on enemy avenues of approach, providing early warning and execution of fires against following enemy forces.

6-40. MAIN BATTLE AREA ENGAGEMENT

The TF seeks to defeat the enemy's attack forward of or within the MBA. If the TF can bring sufficient firepower to shape the enemy in the security area fight, an MBA engagement may not occur . If so, then the brigade can rapidly transition and move its TFs into a strong counterattack. However, the brigade and the TFs normally defend over a large area, and enemy strength often forces a main battle area engagement. The TF commander integrates an MBA engagement that is a combined arms fight integrating both direct and indirect fires, reinforced with obstacles and organic mortars. The brigade continues to focus artillery, CAS, and attack aviation in an effort to attack the enemy continuously throughout the depth of the battlefield, so fire support to the TFs may be limited to critical points and times in the MBA fight. Combining all available fires with maneuver, obstacles, and reserve elements, the TF commander seeks to destroy the enemy or force his transition to a retrograde or hasty defense. The brigade normally specifies control measures to coordinate and focus the defensive operation.

6-41. FOLLOW-ON MISSIONS

Following a successful defense, there may be a period of confusion that the defender can exploit. Given the information capabilities of the TF and brigade, counterattacks can be executed quickly based on branches and sequels to the plan, before the enemy can secure

his gains or organize a defense. METT-TC, ISR results, and the higher commander's concept of operations dictate the TF's follow-on mission. If the situation prevents offensive action, the TF continues to defend. As in the initial establishment of the defense, gaining security area space is critical. A local counterattack can provide space for a security area and time to reorganize. Any attack option must pay particular attention not only to the terrain and enemy, but also to friendly obstacles (and their destruction times if applicable) and areas where dual-purpose improved conventional munitions (DPICM) or bomblets have been used. If the TF or brigade cannot counterattack to gain adequate security space, then the brigade may have to direct one TF to maintain contact with the enemy and guard the AO while others move to reestablish the defense farther to the rear. Whether continuing to defend or transitioning to offensive operations, the TF must quickly reorganize. Key reorganization tasks include--

- Establishing and maintaining security.
- Reestablishing C2 and communications architecture.
- Reorganizing platoons and teams.
- Treating and evacuating casualties.
- Conducting emergency resupply.
- Recovering damaged equipment and initiating repair operations.
- Processing EPWs.
- Refining and updating the SU.

Section V. DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES

The battalion task force normally defends using one of five basic techniques of defense: defend an AO, defend a battle position, defend a reverse slope, defend a strongpoint, and defend a perimeter. The brigade normally assigns the TF an AO to defend.

6-42. DEFENSE OF AN AREA OF OPERATIONS

A defense in AO provides the greatest degree of freedom of maneuver and fire planning within a specific area. The brigade most often uses this method of control when it has an adequate amount of depth and width to the battlefield and does not desire decisive engagement early in the MBA fight. The brigade frequently assigns defense of an AO to task forces. Less frequently, a task force commander may assign his teams AOs to defend. Phase lines, engagement areas, battle positions, and obstacle belts help coordinate forces and achieve synchronized action. During defensive preparations, the commander and key staff officers use backbriefs, inspections, and rehearsals to ensure that the defensive operation is coordinated and that unacceptable or unintended gaps do not develop. Use of AOs allows flexibility and prevents the enemy from concentrating overwhelming firepower on the bulk of the defending force. Forces defending against an enemy with superior mobility and firepower must use the depth of their positions to defeat the enemy. The depth of the defense must come from the initial positioning of units throughout the AO--not from maneuvering. A properly positioned and viable reserve enhances depth (Figure 6-7).

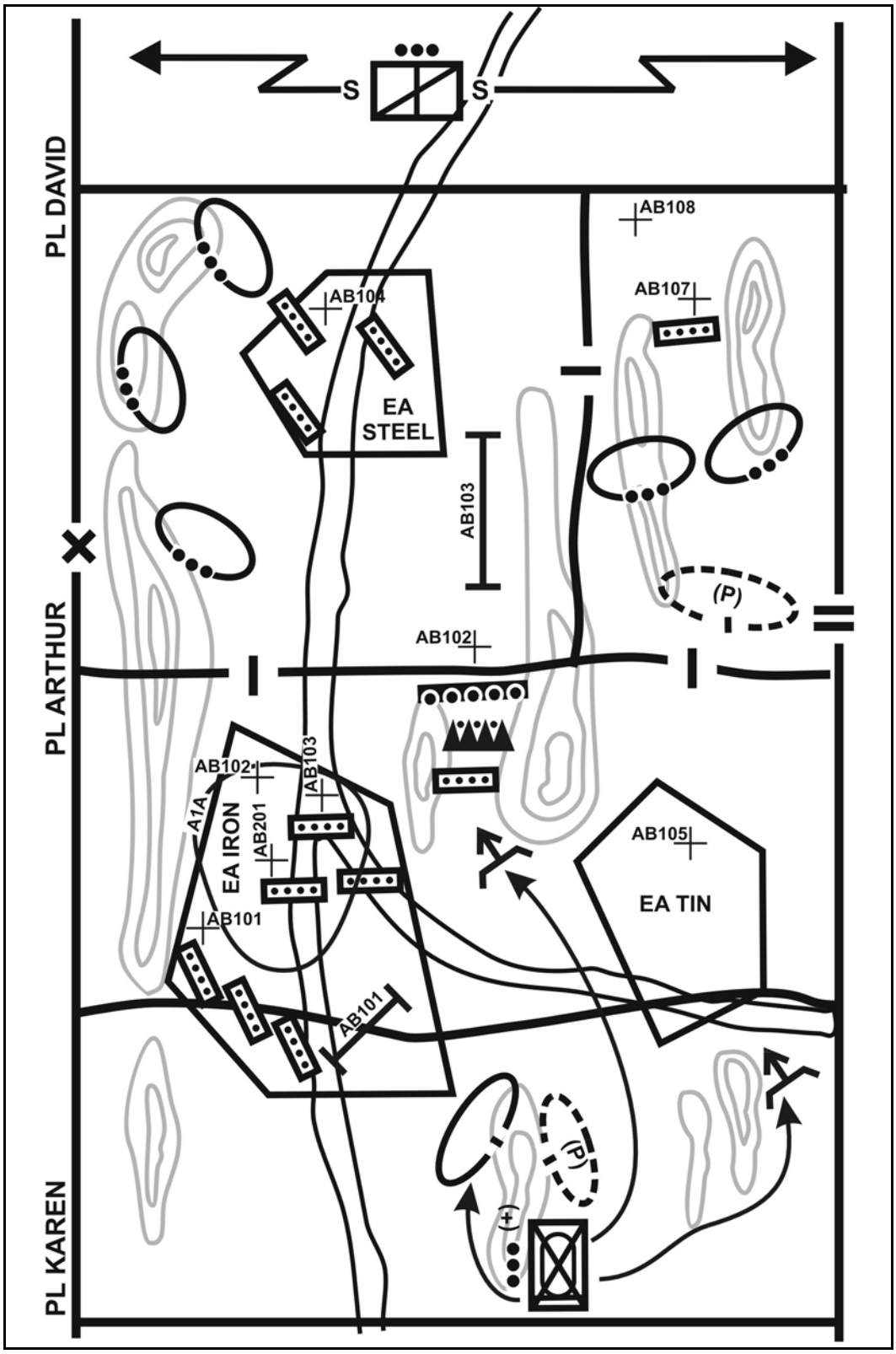


Figure 6-7. Defense of an area of operations.

a. **Positions**. A TF defending against a mounted enemy uses a series of mutually supporting antiarmor positions. These should be located on armor-restricted terrain, protected by infantry, and strengthened by obstacles.

b. **Security**. The AO defense is more effective against armor but more vulnerable to infantry attack or combined arms action, which can be directed against one position at a time. Position preparation must emphasize all-round security and mutual support.

c. **Deployment in Depth**. Forces deployed in depth must confront the enemy with effective fires from multiple locations as he tries to maneuver. The AO is organized around dispersed, small units that attack the enemy throughout the depth of his formations. The focus of this technique is the enemy force. Mines and other obstacles, infantry positions, and patrols can close gaps that fire cannot cover effectively due to terrain masking or heavily wooded areas. The commander can position dismounted infantry along mounted avenues of approach within restricted terrain, thereby maximizing its capabilities. He can position mounted forces either to engage armor and mechanized forces with antiarmor weapons or to provide rapid precision maneuver in the form of counterattacks.

d. **Engagement Options**. The commander has two engagement options when defending an AO. He chooses the appropriate one based mainly on the restrictions of the terrain and his expectation of achieving surprise. His first option is to begin engaging at maximum optimum range, based on the terrain and available weapons systems. His second option is to allow the enemy to move within direct fire range of antiarmor weapons and machine guns. The defender then engages the enemy with violent hasty and deliberate counterattacks designed to destroy the enemy from any direction. In restrictive terrain, this option denies a more mobile enemy force any firepower or mobility advantage.

(1) ***Engage Throughout the Depth/Width of the Attacker***. The defender initiates fires at long ranges with FA, tactical aircraft, and attack helicopters to begin to break up the continuity of the attack. As the enemy closes to within range of organic heavy antiarmor weapons, these weapons further disrupt enemy synchronization and destroy key vehicles. When the enemy enters the engagement range of the TF's organic weapons, antiarmor weapons engage him from multiple unexpected directions and destroy him.

(2) ***Allowing Limited Penetration of the AO.*** This technique is offensively oriented. It allows for planned penetrations, ambushes, and counterattacks throughout the enemy formation. A forward array of forces cannot defend armor approaches. Such an array can be overrun or penetrated rapidly while under massive artillery, smoke, and direct fire suppression. To avoid penetration, the TF must array forces in depth. Concentrating the TF on narrow fronts is risky.

e. **Planning**. The commander considers the following factors when facing a mostly mechanized or armored enemy.

(1) ***Mounted Avenues of Approach***. Avenues of approach determine enemy mounted avenues of approach and the size force that can move on each. The commander or S3 estimates the maximum number of vehicles the enemy can deploy at one time on given avenues of approach and the length of time this target array would be exposed.

(2) ***Engagement Areas***. An engagement area is a terrain-based fire control measure situated along an enemy avenue of approach. Commanders design EAs in order to destroy a designated enemy force by massing the effects of a majority of their available

systems. The size and shape of the area is determined by the degree of maximum range intervisibility from respective weapon systems and the number of units available.

(3) ***Massing of Tank, Bradley Fighting Vehicle, and Antitank Fires***. Mass antiarmor fires by assigning target engagement areas, primary and alternate sectors of fire, and TRPs. Attached antiarmor assets can be attached to or in DS of a company team.

(4) ***Obstacle Planning and Integration***. Plan obstacles to disrupt, fix, turn, or block the enemy and protect positions. Encountering these obstacles increases enemy exposure time and enhances the effects of direct and indirect fires.

(5) ***Integrated Fire Support***. Planned CAS sorties can provide rapid and concentrated aerial-delivered firepower in the first, crucial engagements of the battle. Mortars and artillery increase the effects of antiarmor weapons by suppressing enemy overwatch elements, forcing enemy armor to button up. Attack helicopters rapidly mass antiarmor and antipersonnel weapons and provide security on flanks and other unoccupied areas.

6-43. DEFENSE FROM A BATTLE POSITION

A battle position is a general location and orientation of forces on the ground from which units defend. TF- to platoon-size units can use BPs (Figure 6-8).

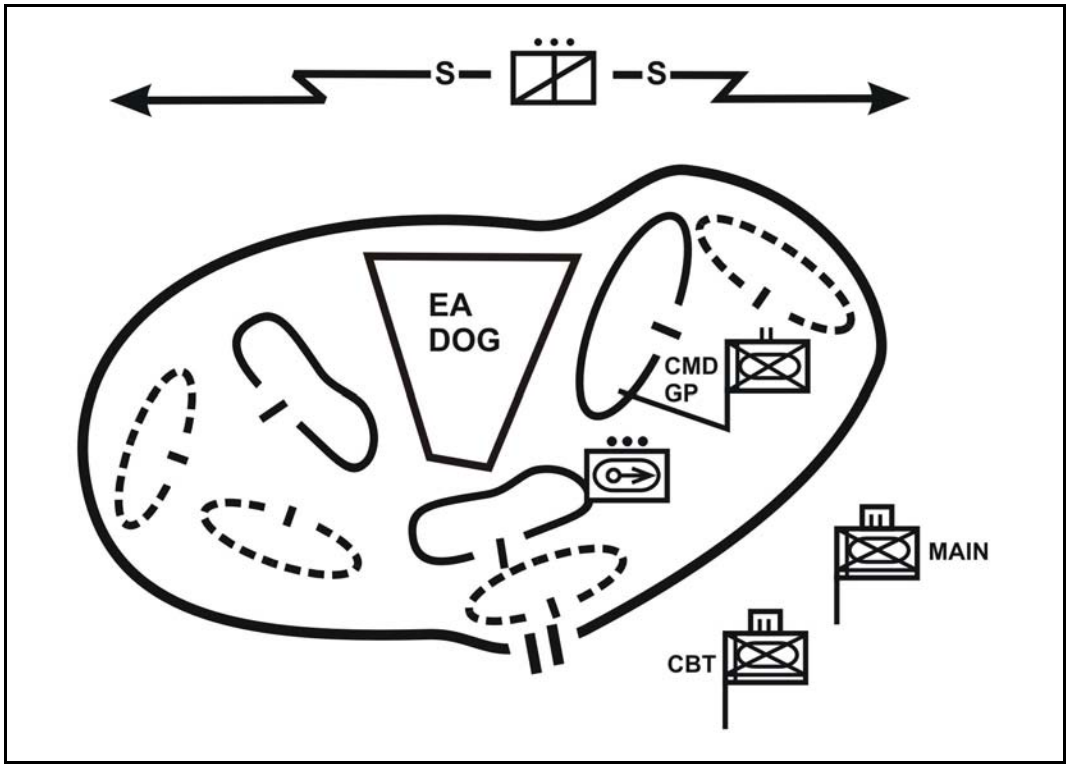


Figure 6-8. Disposition of forces in and about a battle position.

a. **Use of Battle Positions**. Use of battle positions reduces the instructions needed to move a force. BPs are often used as graphic control measures for a FRAGO and are identified by number, letter, name, or a combination.

b. **Three Levels of Preparation for a Battle Position**. The three levels of preparation for a BP are occupy, prepare, and reconnoiter. The use of on-order BPs with

the associated tasks "prepare" or "reconnoiter" adds flexibility and depth to the defensive plan.

(1) ***Occupy***. This is complete preparation of the position from which the company team will initially defend. The position is fully reconnoitered, prepared, and occupied before the “defend not later than (NLT)” time specified in the TF OPORD. The company team must rehearse the occupation, and the commander must establish a trigger for occupation of the position.

(2) ***Prepare***. The unit fully reconnoiters the position and the corresponding engagement area, marking vehicle positions in the BP and fire control measures in the engagement area. From the BP, the unit must accomplish all actions to enable it to execute the mission immediately upon occupation. Planning, coordination, and rehearsals are required for the unit to displace to the BP and accomplish the mission from it. Within time constraints, the unit digs in survivability positions, constructs fighting positions, designates TRPs, develops direct and indirect fire plans, emplaces obstacles, clears fields of fire, and prestocks ammunition. Prepare missions are normally critical to the defense. A unit assigned such a mission must maintain security on the position and on the routes to it.

(3) ***Reconnoiter***. The unit fully reconnoiters the engagement area and BP, planning tentative unit positions in the BP and establishing limited fire control measures in the engagement area. The unit must coordinate and plan for defense from this position. Leaders reconnoiter, select, and mark positions, routes, and locations for security elements. They coordinate movement and other actions, such as preparing obstacles and occupation plans, with other elements of the TF.

c. **Maneuver**. The commander can maneuver his elements freely within the assigned BP. To comply with the commander's intent, units can maneuver outside the BP to adjust fires or to seize opportunities for offensive action. TF security, CS, and CSS assets are often positioned outside the BP with approval from the headquarters assigning the BP.

d. **Space Allocation**. The commander allocates space to subordinate elements within the BP area based on the space available and the relative danger of nuclear and chemical attack. The TF commander thinks two levels down, or in terms of platoon BPs, when he selects a BP for subordinate company teams. He must allow enough space on each BP for dispersed primary, supplementary, and alternate positions for key weapons. The TF commander can vary the degree of maneuver elements in the TF BP by allocating larger company team BPs. Battle positions can also reflect positions in depth. They may take a shape other than the standard oblong shape which suggests a linear defense within the BP. Large positions also increase dispersion in a nuclear and chemical environment. The commander can combine AOs and BPs in the TF AO to suit the tactical situation.

e. **Types of Battle Positions**. There are five types of battle positions.

(1) ***Primary Positions***. Primary positions cover the enemy’s most likely avenue of approach into the area. A primary position is the best position from which to accomplish the assigned mission.

(2) ***Alternate Positions***. Alternate positions are those assigned for use when the primary position becomes untenable or unsuitable for carrying out the assigned task. These positions allow the defender to carry out his original task, such as covering an avenue of approach or engagement area. Alternate positions increase the defender’s

survivability by allowing engagement of the enemy from multiple positions and movement to other positions in case of suppressive or obscuring fires.

(3) ***Supplementary Positions***. Supplementary positions are designated to cover avenues of approach that are not expected to be the enemy's primary avenue.

(4) ***Subsequent Positions***. Subsequent positions are those to which the unit expects to move during the course of the battle. The defending unit may have a series of subsequent positions (particularly in delay operations), each with associated primary, alternate, and supplementary positions.

6-44. REVERSE SLOPE DEFENSE

A reverse slope defense is organized to use a topographical crest to mask the defender from the attacker's observation and from supporting direct fire (Figure 6-9).

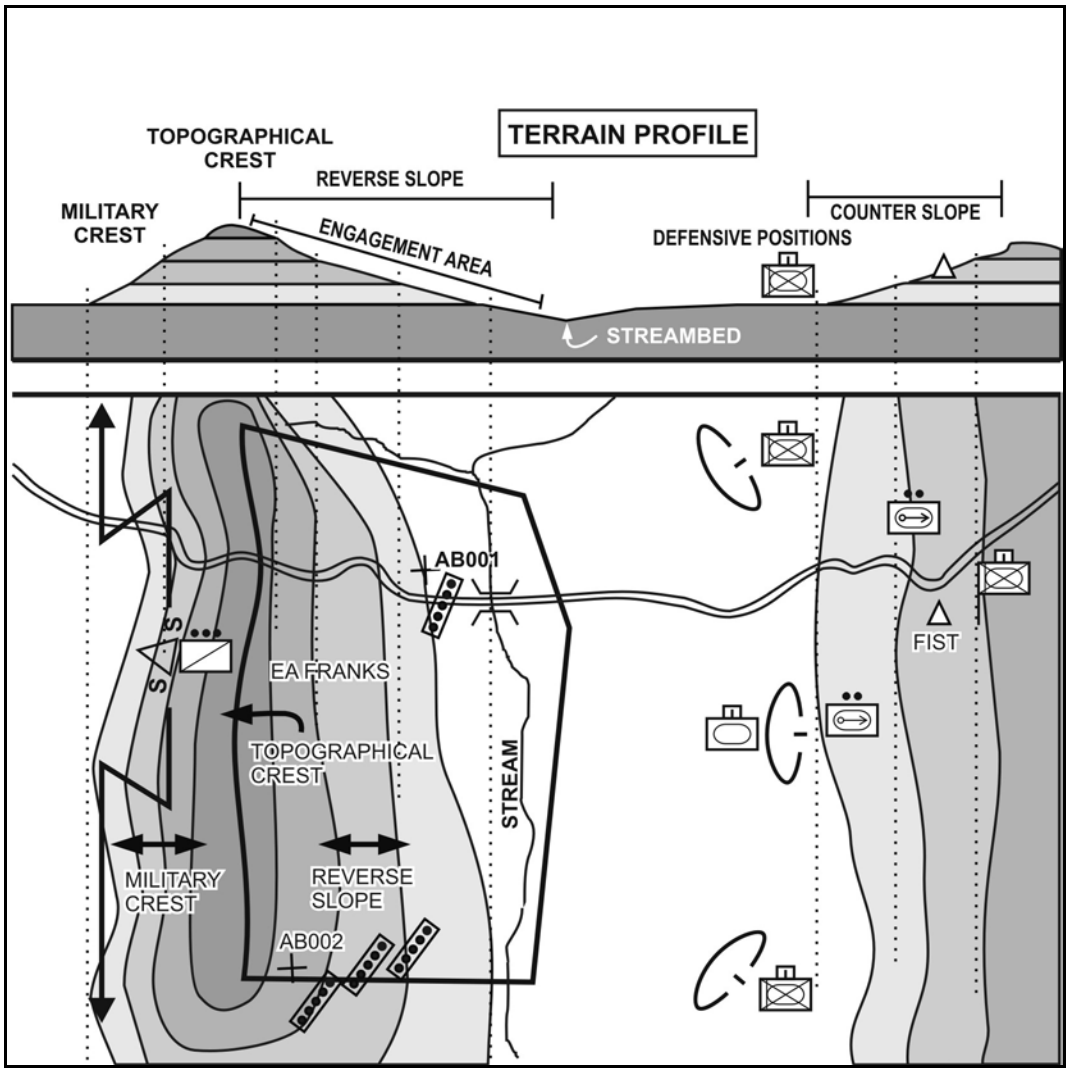


Figure 6-9. Organization of the reverse slope defense.

a. **Conditions**. The TF commander may adopt a reverse slope position for elements of the TF when--

- Enemy fire makes the forward slope untenable.
- Lack of cover and concealment on the forward slope makes it untenable.
- The forward slope has been lost or has not yet been gained.
- The forward slope is exposed to enemy direct fire weapons fired from beyond the effective range of the defender's weapons. Moving to the reverse slope removes the attacker's standoff advantage.
- The terrain on the reverse slope affords better fields of fire than the forward slope.
- The defender must avoid creating a dangerous salient or reentrant in friendly lines.
- Surprising and deceiving the enemy as to the true location of the TF defensive positions is essential.

b. **Advantages**. The following are some advantages of a reverse slope defense:
- Enemy ground observation of the battle area is masked, even from surveillance devices and radar.
- Enemy direct fire weapons cannot effectively fire on the position without coming within range of the defender's weapons.
- The enemy must try to breach obstacles on the reverse slope within direct fire range of all the defender's weapons. (The attacker cannot locate these obstacles until he encounters them, thus reducing his reaction time and maneuver space.)
- The enemy is deceived as to the strength and location of defensive positions.
- Enemy indirect fire is less effective since he cannot see the defender.
- The defender gains tactical surprise.
- The lack of enemy ground observation allows more freedom of movement within the battle area.
- Tanks, BFVs, Javelins, and tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) missile systems, if positioned properly, can mass fires on the reverse military crest; infantry small-arms weapons can contribute their close fires to the battle.
- The unit can dig in more quickly even when the enemy is approaching because the slope of the hill covers and conceals the unit from the direct fire and observation of approaching enemy ground forces. Defenders can concentrate on position preparation.
- The terrain protects the unit from the blast and thermal effects of enemy or friendly force nuclear weapons.

c. **Disadvantages**. The following are some disadvantages of a reverse slope:
- Observation of the enemy may be limited, and the defender may be unable to cover obstacles to the front by direct fire.
- The topographical crest may limit the range of important direct fire weapons. These weapons may have to locate separately from the dismounted infantry elements to exploit their range.

- The enemy holds the high ground in an attack. His attack is downhill; the counterattack is uphill. This may provide a psychological advantage to the enemy.
- Because the reverse military crest must be controlled, the effectiveness of the reverse slope defense is reduced during limited visibility.

d. **Organization of the Defensive Position**. The TF commander organizes the defensive position IAW procedures that apply to all defensive techniques.

(1) ***Forward Edge of the Position***. The forward edge of the position should be within small arms range of the crest. It should be far enough from the crest that fields of fire allow the defender time to place well-aimed fire on the enemy before he reaches friendly positions.

(2) ***Flanking Fires***. A reverse slope position is most effective when units on adjacent terrain can place flanking fires on the forward slope.

(3) ***Security Force***. The units should establish a security force to the front to stop or delay the enemy, to disorganize his attack, and to deceive him as to the location of the defensive position. When this security element withdraws, the unit must maintain observation, indirect fire, and security to the front.

(4) ***Observation Posts***. The unit establishes observation posts on or forward of the topographical crest. This allows long-range observation over the entire front and indirect fire coverage of forward obstacles. OPs are usually provided by the reserve and may vary in size from a few soldiers to a reinforced squad. They should include FOs. At night, their number should be increased to improve security.

6-45. DEFENSE OF A STRONGPOINT

A strong point is a heavily fortified battle position tied to a natural or reinforcing obstacle to create an anchor for the defense or to deny the enemy decisive or key terrain (FM 3-90). The mission to create and defend a strongpoint implies retention of terrain to stop or redirect enemy formations. Strongpoint's require extensive time, engineering support, and Class IV resources to construct. An armor heavy company team could serve as the strongpoint defending team. The surveillance, target acquisition, and information-sharing capabilities of the tank enable it to destroy enemy combat vehicles rapidly and at long range. As a reserve, its capabilities enable rapid movement from hide positions to attack by fire positions. Mechanized company teams or task forces may be given strongpoint missions in rare instances, but again, the static nature of the operation and the resources required to conduct the strongpoint make it an unusual mission assignment. TF strongpoints can be established in isolation when tied to restrictive terrain on their flanks or on armor high-speed avenues of approach tied to unit defensive positions on the strongpoint flanks. A bypassed strongpoint exposes enemy flanks to attacks from friendly forces inside and outside the strongpoint.

a. **Planning a Strongpoint Defense**. The TF pays a high cost in manpower, equipment, material, and time to construct a strongpoint. It takes several days of dedicated work to construct one. Strongpoints sacrifice the inherent mobility advantage of heavy forces.

(1) ***Enemy Assault***. When it cannot easily bypass a strongpoint, the unit should expect and be ready to repel repeated enemy dismounted assaults. The strongpoint will probably receive intensive artillery attacks and must be prepared with overhead cover.

Multiple positions in the strongpoint provide defense in depth. Combat vehicles committed to the strongpoint defense use multiple firing positions while infantry squads use positions tied together with trenches. A TF assigned a strongpoint mission--

- Plans movement to alternative positions in the strongpoint.
- Coordinates with forces outside the strongpoint, especially counterattack forces.
- Plans direct fires in detail and receives fire support priority.
- Establishes a small reserve to counter penetrations and, when appropriate, attack outside the strongpoint.

(2) ***Mutual Support***. All positions in a strongpoint are mutually supporting (Figure 6-10). Positioning must allow massing of the fire of two or more units against an assault and prevent the enemy from isolating positions and defeating them in detail. Sectors of fire help coordinate and mass fires between positions. Avenues of approach into and around the strongpoint that cannot be covered by forces in primary positions must be kept under surveillance and covered by supplementary positions prepared in as much detail as time permits and occupied on order.

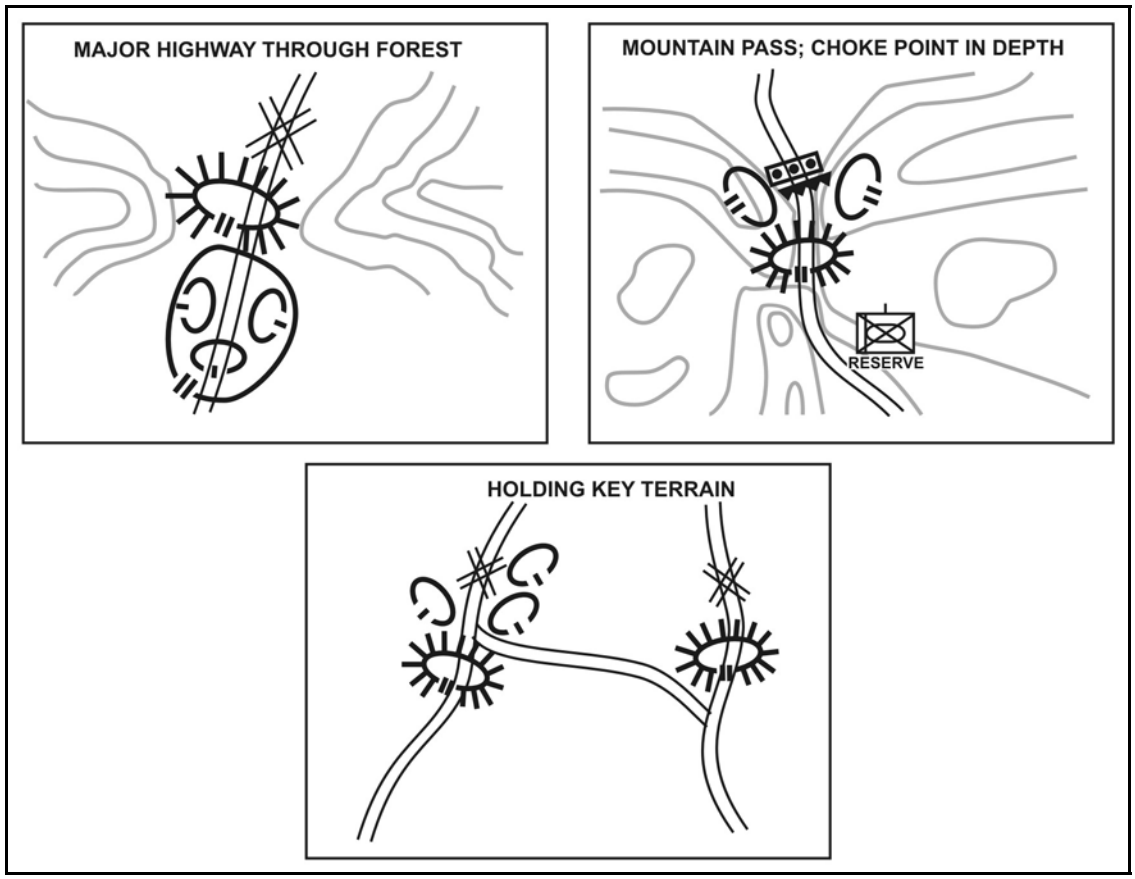


Figure 6-10. Battalion task force strongpoint.

(3) ***Forces Operating outside the Strongpoint***. In some situations, the TF defends from a strongpoint with forces operating outside the strongpoint. Security forces may operate forward or perform economy of force missions. On their return to the strongpoint,

security forces either screen a secondary avenue of approach or occupy a position in depth.

(4) ***Infantry Squads***. The commander may separate the BFVs and infantry squads, placing the infantry squads on restrictive terrain with the BFVs deployed in positions in depth. If available, antiarmor forces occupy positions in depth to take advantage of their long-range fires. Alternate and supplementary positions are planned throughout the strongpoint and AO. Mortars operate in split section on the reverse slope or in a built-up area in the center of the strongpoint. Combat trains, with emergency resupply of Classes II and V, are placed in prepared defilade positions or buildings in the strongpoint. Supplies are pre-positioned near primary, alternate, and supplementary positions. The brigade provides units to keep the main supply route open.

(5) ***Armor Heavy Reserve***. As in the defense of a battle position, an armor heavy company team could serve as the strongpoint defending team. The surveillance, target acquisition, and information-sharing capabilities of the tank enable it to destroy enemy combat vehicles rapidly and at long range. As a reserve, its capabilities enable rapid movement from hide positions to attack by fire positions.

(6) ***Security Force***. The commander may use a mechanized heavy company team as part of the security force to provide intelligence through contact and spot reports. The company team assigned the security mission screens the TF AO or along the most dangerous avenue of approach. This company team provides early warning to the TF, destroys enemy reconnaissance elements, and helps shape the battlefield so the enemy is directed against the strongpoint.

b. **Intelligence Support for a Strongpoint**. The strongpoint represents the culmination of the brigade battle staff IPB and the commander's estimate of the situation. Based on a METT-TC analysis, the brigade commander identifies the decisive terrain that, if seized by the enemy, would result in the brigade combat team’s (BCT’s) defeat. This decisive terrain is the strongpoint.

(1) ***Terrain Analysis***. The TF S2 analyzes the terrain in a very detailed manner. Unlike other types of defense, the strongpoint must be defensible in 360 degrees. As a result, the terrain analysis must be conducted with the understanding that enemy offensive operations, from an infiltration to a major attack, could appear from any direction (multiple avenues of approach).

(2) ***ISR OPORD***. The reconnaissance and surveillance plan is essential to the strongpoint’s effectiveness. Some reconnaissance assets may be able to operate outside the position to provide initial early warning. If the strongpoint becomes encircled, the unit must be able to anticipate the actions of the enemy and respond internally. OPs positioned outside the position must be sustainable should the strongpoint become surrounded. The unit should have a plan for bringing patrols or other reconnaissance assets into the position despite enemy presence.

c. **Maneuver Concept**. The strongpoint defense is the most labor-intensive operation a TF commander may execute. Despite its static nature, the construction must allow for maximum flexibility. The key to an effective and sustainable strongpoint defense is to have a solid direct and indirect fire plan coupled with properly constructed fortifications. The commander must take a personal interest in the interface between combat, CS, and CSS elements.

(1) ***Positions***. The selection of company team combat, CS, and CSS positions is the first priority of the TF commander. He must plan so his weapons systems can engage the enemy effectively along the major expected enemy avenue of approach. The S2's line-of-sight analysis, the IPB, and the brigade obstacle plan determine these positions. The actual construction of the TF EA and the direct fire control measures are identical to that discussed in earlier sections. The considerations for weapons systems employment, however, may be different, particularly with respect to the lack of depth in the strongpoint itself. In a strongpoint, it is much more difficult to achieve depth of fires than in AO defensive operations. Generally, infantry squads secure the outskirts alongside or slightly to the left or right front of the perimeter.

(2) ***Battle Position Selection***. Once the commander has determined the locations suitable for each type of weapon system, he selects the company team BPs. He must address several considerations before finalizing the BPs. First, how much firepower is needed to cover the enemy avenue of approach? Second, how can BPs be selected so they can be responsive to enemy attacks from other directions? Third, what task organization is best suited to the terrain and meets the security needs of the TF?

(3) ***Reserve***. In a strongpoint defense, it is important to maintain a reserve that can react to enemy activity against the position. The reserve may be mounted, dismounted, or both. The reserve may--

- Block an enemy penetration of the perimeter.
- Reinforce a position or section of the defense.
- Counterattack to restore a portion of the strongpoint.

d. **Strongpoint Fire Support**. Dominating terrain features, mounted and dismounted avenues of approach, and likely enemy avenues of approach hidden from direct observation should be targeted. In this way, the fire support plan will help keep the enemy at a distance from the strongpoint (Figure 6-11).

(1) If the enemy is able to reach the strongpoint in significant strength, the close-in fire support plan is essential to the integrity and survivability of the position. Fires must be planned on obstacles close to the position, even if they are danger close. Evacuation of the position may become necessary during the battle. If fires are planned on the position, the unit can destroy the enemy and reoccupy the positions for continued defense.

(2) If 360-degree indirect mortar support is required, the mortar tubes are dismounted from the vehicles so they can respond easily to calls for fire in any direction. If the mortar tubes remain in the tracks, firing in some directions will be difficult without moving the vehicle. The vehicles should remain in proximity to the tubes, dug in, and serving as an ammunition storage facility. Figure 6-11 illustrates the overall TF fire support plan.

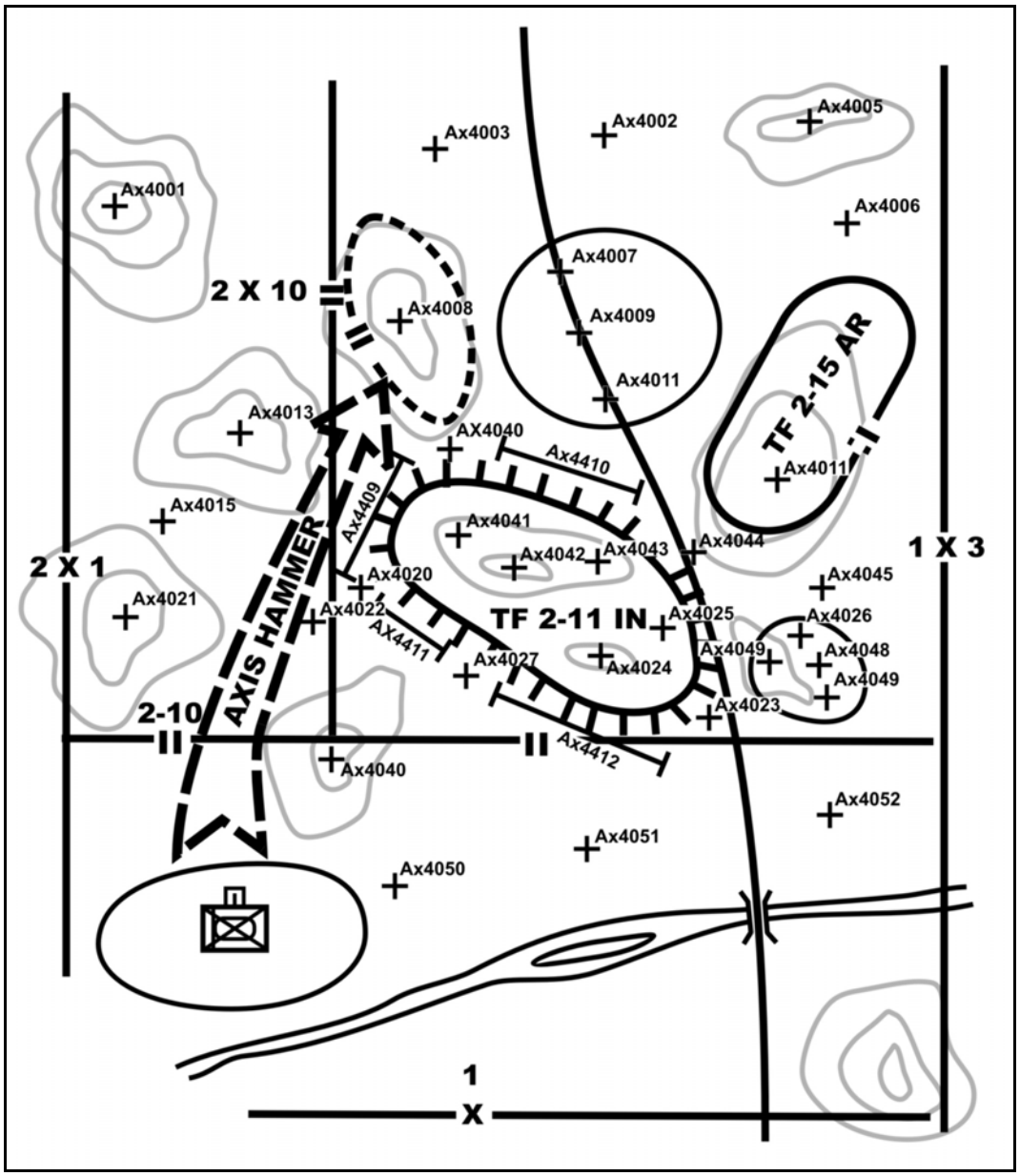


Figure 6-11. Strongpoint fire support plan.

e. **Strongpoint Engineer Support**. The engineer company commander accompanies the maneuver commander on the reconnaissance of the strongpoint area. He plans indirect fires and scatterable mines to slow, disrupt, and canalize the advancing enemy and prepares the position to make it physically impassable to tanks and to enhance the killing power of antitank (AT) weapons with obstacles. Based on the commander's guidance and priority, the engineer commander determines emplacement priority for fighting positions and obstacles and allocates the assets needed to accomplish the mission. Strongpoints are constructed from inside to outside. Regardless of the configuration of the strongpoint, the following are essential tasks to perform:

- Prepare obstacles to prevent their being overrun by tanks.
- Prepare hull down positions for fighting vehicles.

- Emplace obstacles at optimum weapons range.
- Construct protected routes between positions.
- Plan and coordinate for scatterable mines.

f. **Air Defense Artillery Support for a Strongpoint**. The air defense commander identifies positions to facilitate engagements of enemy fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. The air defense commander ensures the engineers site actual positions properly. Engineers know how to construct positions, but the "occupant" must ensure the position is properly oriented.

g. **Strongpoint Combat Service Support**. The TF S4 helps plan for the following aspects of CSS in a strongpoint.

(1) ***Cache***. The S4 examines the engineer's strongpoint construction plan and determines the best places to cache ammunition and supplies. The units refine the cache plan by positioning smaller caches adjacent to individual crew-served weapons. Once the unit caches have been identified or sited, the TF S4 develops a resupply plan. TF caches must be dispersed throughout the strongpoint to prevent a single detonation.

(2) ***Medical Support***. The HSS plan must take into consideration whether to use a consolidated BAS or whether to push medical support forward. The time and distance factors to the perimeter should be considered when placing treatment facilities. A four-man litter team on average terrain can travel 900 meters and return in one hour. A six-man litter team in mountainous terrain can travel approximately 350 meters and return in one hour. The BAS should be dug in, with easy access to each supported unit, water supply, and generator. If possible, a bunker will be made available to the BAS. In an elongated strongpoint, the BAS may split its treatment teams to provide support from two locations.

(3) ***Refuel Points***. Even though vehicles in the position are static, they still burn fuel during idling, particularly while running their thermal sights. The TF must develop a refueling plan.

(4) ***Combat Trains CP***. The combat trains CP is dug in separately from the battalion task force CP. It serves as the alternate CP should the main CP be destroyed. It is positioned away from the main CP but in proximity to the aid station and supply activities. The CTCP must establish redundant communications with the main CP so that direct communication via landline, for example, is possible between the two headquarters.

h. **Strongpoint Command and Control**. The commander develops his strongpoint defense plan by using the terrain to its utmost advantage. The commander must be able to traverse the strongpoint and respond to an attack from any direction. His observation posts must afford the opportunity to observe the battle. Communication wire must be buried deep in the strongpoint and field phones made available throughout the position.

6-46. PERIMETER DEFENSE

A perimeter defense is a defense oriented in all directions (Figure 6-12). The TF uses it for self-protection. The TF establishes a perimeter defense when it must hold critical terrain in areas where the defense is not tied in with adjacent units. The TF may also form a perimeter when it has been bypassed and isolated by the enemy and must defend in place. These differences are in contrast to the strongpoint defense, in which the position

is tied in with the rest of the defense and considerable time and resources are spent to hold the ground.

a. **Planning Considerations**. While in a perimeter defense, the task force should consider--

- Placing security as far out as possible.
- Positioning armor and antiarmor weapons in protected positions and concentrating their fires on armor avenues of approach.
- Maintaining an armor pure or armor heavy reserve.

b. **Retention of Key Terrain**. The TF retains terrain key to future operations such as linkup, extraction, or breakout. The TF commander employs a security force outside the perimeter for early warning. He augments the security force with mounted or dismounted patrols and OPs controlled by subordinate company teams on the perimeter. Periodic patrols cover areas that stationary elements cannot observe.

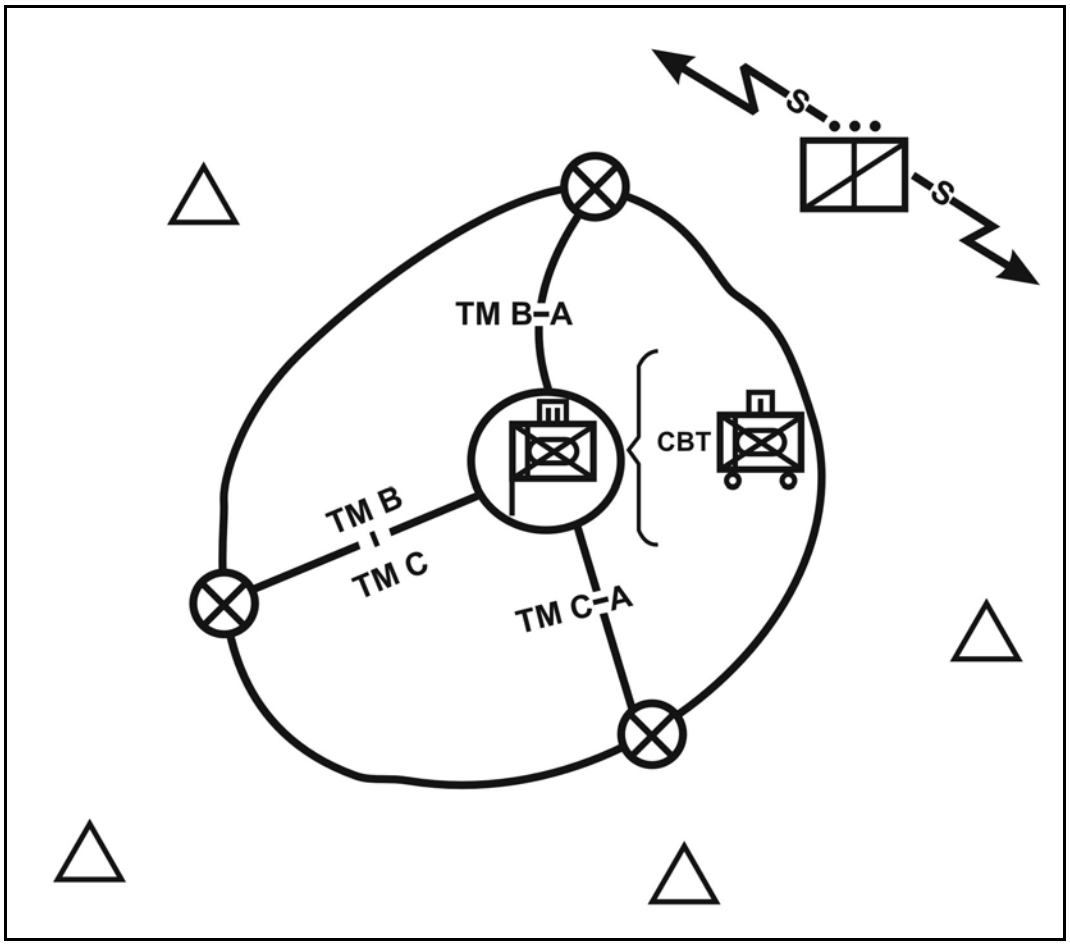


Figure 6-12. Perimeter defense.

c. **TF Reserve**. The TF reserve defends a portion of the second line of defense behind the perimeter elements. The reserve must have the mobility to react to enemy action in any portion of the perimeter. It is positioned to block the most dangerous avenue of approach and is assigned on-order positions on other critical avenues. If the enemy penetrates the perimeter, the reserve blocks the enemy penetration or counterattacks to

restore the perimeter. After committing the reserve, the commander immediately designates a new reserve force to meet other threats.

d. **C2**. If the TF forms the perimeter because of isolation, then combat, CS, and CSS elements from other units come under the tactical command of the senior combat commander in the perimeter. The commander assigns them missions based on support capabilities.

e. **CSS Support**. CSS elements may support from inside the perimeter or from another location depending on the mission and status of the TF, the type of transport available, the weather, and the terrain. All service support assets inside the perimeter should be in a protected location from which they can provide continuous support. Since resupply may have to be done by air, the position should include or be near a landing or drop zone. Resupply is often by air. The availability of LZs and drop zones (DZs) protected from the enemy's observation and fire is a main consideration in selecting and organizing the position. Since aerial resupply is vulnerable to weather and enemy fires, commanders must emphasize supply economy and protection of available stocks.

6-47. COUNTERATTACK

The task force may conduct local counterattacks to restore or preserve defensive integrity. Unless defensive operations have left the task force largely intact or with sufficient combat power, the task force usually lacks the ability to conduct a significant counterattack by itself.

a. Counterattacks are conducted to take advantage of an attacking enemy's weakened condition by striking against his flanks or rear or to deny the enemy commander the momentum and initiative. Within the context of the defending task force, it may execute a counterattack to support the brigade’s defensive posture as part of a larger force seeking to complete the destruction of the enemy’s attack or as part of a transition to offensive operations. Counterattacks are also conducted to dislodge an enemy from within the perimeter of a battalion defensive position. As the enemy's advance is slowed and weakened, his maneuver options become less available. As a result, he may transition to a hasty defense along the FLOT, or he may attempt to gain a foothold within a battalion's defensive position from which he can defend. This situation allows the commander to seek decisive opportunities to counterattack the enemy with all available force and ultimately secure the initiative of the battle.

b. Timing is critical to a counterattack. If committed too soon, reserves may not have the desired effect or may not be available for a more dangerous contingency. If committed too late, they may be ineffective. Once committed, counterattack forces may penetrate the enemy's flanks and attack the enemy's artillery and logistic areas or penetrate the enemy's flanks and attack them from the rear. Both actions are decisive and will create grave concern for the enemy. Adequate warning time must be given to the reserve. The reserve cannot remain ready to go indefinitely. A rested reserve force will perform better than one that has been on one hour alert for the previous 48 hours. Reserve commanders and staffs must closely monitor the flow of the battle.

c. The TF may decide to use the reserve as a counterattack force to penetrate enemy forces or defeat the attacker. Basic guidelines for counterattacks include--

- Attack one objective at a time and weight it with all available combat power and fires. Avoid piecemeal commitment of the counterattacking force. Once committed, the counterattack force is normally the main effort.
- Determine movement times based on routes available and develop clear DPs for when and where to launch the counterattack.
- Defeat the targeted enemy force before being attacked by subsequent enemy forces. Indirect fires and situational obstacles may delay follow-on attacking enemy forces.
- Determine and recognize enemy deception efforts aimed at causing the premature or indecisive commitment of the reserve.
- Seek to avoid the enemy's strength. The most effective attacks are against exposed enemy flanks and or rear. Attacks from an unexpected direction at the point and time of the enemy's greatest vulnerability have the best potential for success. Take advantage of the protection and concealment offered by the terrain and or limited visibility.
- Maintain flexibility. Although counterattack plans are developed during the planning process, the counterattack force must be prepared to quickly attack at different times and locations based on the actual situation. Anticipation of events, a clear understanding of the commander's intent, and a heavy reliance on SOPs greatly increase the agility of the counterattack force.
- When feasible, launch counterattacks around other committed units rather than through them. This reduces the vulnerability and time-consuming coordination associated with a passage of lines.
- Consider the strength, disposition, and location of the enemy's reserve. If the reserve is committed before the enemy reserve is committed, the TF may lack the ability to counter the enemy reserve. If the enemy's reserve is uncommitted, the TF must take measures to prevent its decisive commitment into the battle. Fires, situational obstacles, and CAS may be able to delay, neutralize, or destroy the enemy reserve, providing time for the TF to counterattack and recover its reserve.

d. The commander uses DPs and NAIs (developed during construction of the DST) in conjunction with ISR and battlefield results ascertained via reports and the COP to trigger execution of a counterattack. The commander and staff consider the enemy situation and estimate time and space factors relating to the movement of enemy forces. The staff considers time and space requirements for the counterattack force to close on the enemy force, attack, and then withdraw or consolidate before follow-on enemy echelons can interfere. The staff considers the likely strength and composition of the targeted enemy force to determine supporting efforts, fires, and obstacles required for supporting the counterattack objective. It considers what likely interdiction against enemy reserves and follow-on forces is necessary. The staff must determine what the reserve will do once it has completed the counterattack. If the mission of the counterattack force is to stay and defend against another enemy echelon (such as when MBA forces are weak and the reserve is still strong), it must have time to gain good defensible positions before follow-on enemy echelons can interfere. If the reserve is to withdraw after its mission and continue to serve as the TF reserve, the plan must address its reconstitution. The counterattack plan must address--

- Task(s) and purpose of the counterattack force.
- Task(s) and purpose of the counterattack force once the counterattack is completed.
- Commander's intent.
- Planning assumptions to include the size and shape of the assumed penetration or salient; the strength, composition, and disposition of the enemy force; and the status of forces in the MBA.
- Supporting efforts, units, fires, and obstacles that will support the counterattack.
- Adequate control measures such as routes, axis of advance, boundaries, RFL, objective(s), EAs, and LOA.
- Adequate FSCMs and A2C2 measures.
- Specific control measures and procedures for a passage of lines.
- Traffic control plans for ensuring movement routes remain open.

e. Effective counterattacks require detailed coordination and refinement to include reconnaissance of routes and positions, rehearsals, verification of time and space factors, fire planning, and coordination with adjacent units. Counterattack plans are rehearsed during the day and night. The counterattack force should mark routes, establish guides, and improve routes to ensure smooth execution. The reserve commander coordinates with adjacent task forces for--

- Movement and attack routes.
- Passage of lines, if required.
- Location and orientation of friendly positions and units.
- Actions for continuation of the attack to or beyond the FEBA.
- Coordination of key control measures to include boundaries, objectives, checkpoints, and the LOA. This also includes coordination of fires (target reference points, EAs, and RFL).
- Location of FOs, scouts, and reconnaissance assets communication and digital nodes.
- Location of obstacles and obstacle lanes guides and far and near lane markings.

f. The commander may commit the reserve to contain enemy penetrations when the enemy's strength prevents the TF from launching a decisive counterattack. During planning, the staff can prepare for penetrations by analyzing enemy COAs and friendly weaknesses to anticipate possible locations of penetration. During planning, the staff war-games possible enemy penetrations. It considers the actions and routes of the assumed penetrating enemy force to identify favorable terrain for countering it. The staff develops these areas as BPs, EAs, or objectives, then assigns the reserve the appropriate planning priorities to respond to the possible penetration. The staff defines routes, control measures, and FSCMs needed to control the attack. Hypothetical enemy penetrations must be considered, graphically displayed and given to all TF company commanders. Company commanders use this information in their planning. Although plans are developed in advance, the TF must be prepared to counter unexpected enemy penetrations wherever they occur.

Section VI. COUNTERMOBILITY, MOBILITY, AND SURVIVABILITY INTEGRATION

Much of the strength of a defense rests on the integration and construction of reinforcing obstacles, exploitation of existing obstacles, and actions to enhance the survivability of the force through construction of fighting positions and fortifications. The commander's intent focuses mobility and survivability planning through his articulation of obstacle intent (target, relative location, obstacle effect) and priorities and establishment of priorities for survivability and mobility. Guided by that intent, the TF engineer (usually the DS engineer company commander) develops a scheme of engineer operations that includes engineer task organization, priorities of effort and support, subordinate engineer unit missions, and mobility and survivability instructions for all units. Chapter 9 contains information on engineer systems and capabilities.

6-48. COUNTERMOBILITY

The commander and staff develop the obstacle plan concurrently with the fire support plan and defensive scheme, guided by the commander's intent. (Figure 6-13, page 6-62) illustrates an example of a TF obstacle plan.) They must integrate into the ISR order the use of intelligent minefields such as Raptor, if allocated. The commander's intent for countermobility should contain three elements.

a. **Target**. The target is the enemy force that the commander wants to affect with fires and situational obstacles. The commander identifies the target in terms of the size and type of enemy force, the echelon, the avenue of approach, or a combination of these aspects.

b. **Effect**. This is the intended effect that the commander wants the obstacles and fires to have on the targeted enemy force. Tactical obstacles produce one of the following effects: block, turn, fix, or disrupt (Table 6-2, page 6-63). The obstacle effect drives integration, focuses subordinate fires, and focuses the obstacle effort.

c. **Relative Location**. The relative location is where the commander wants the obstacle effect to occur against the targeted enemy force. Whenever possible, the commander identifies the location relative to the terrain and maneuver or fire control measures to integrate the effects of obstacles with fires.

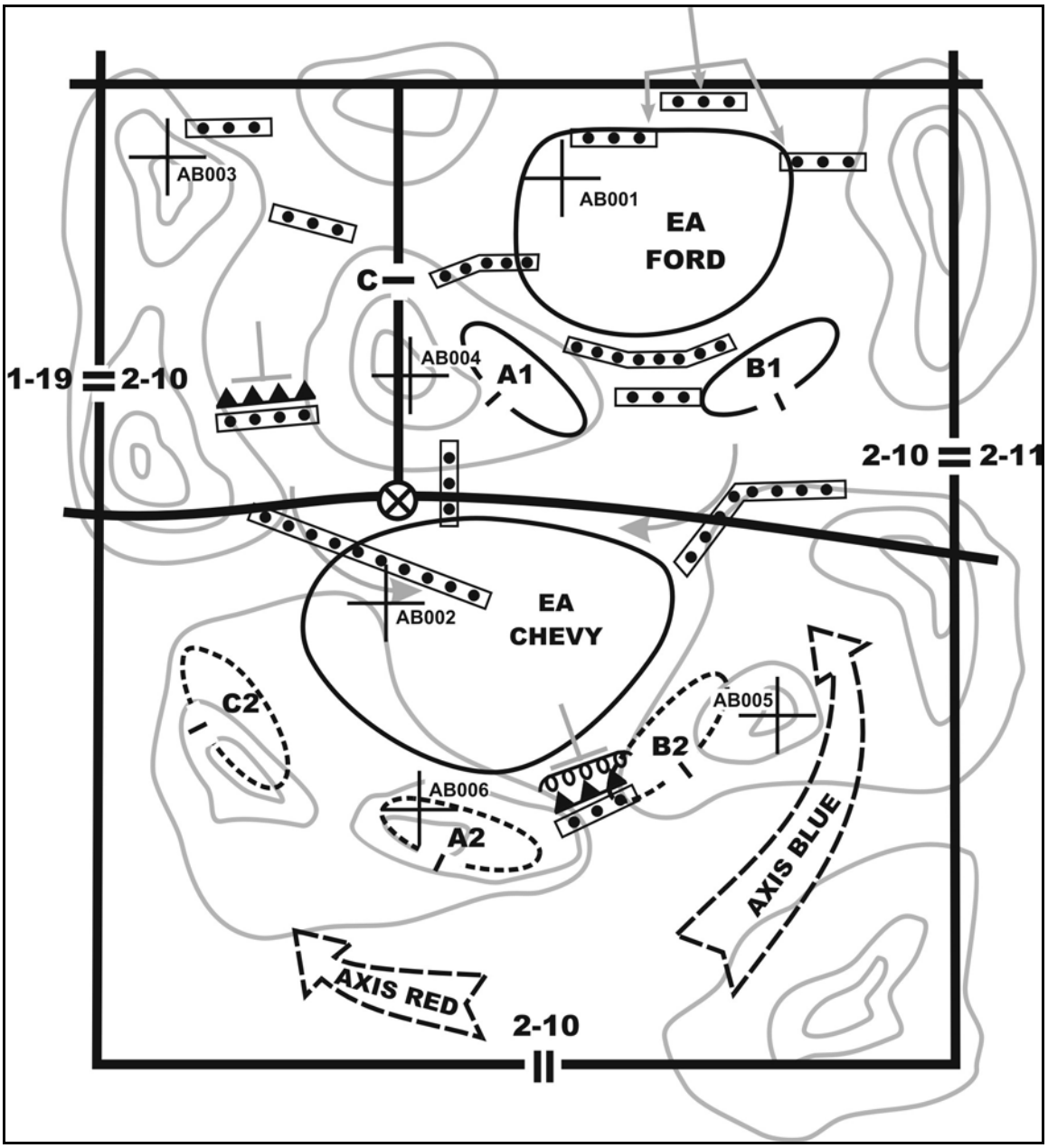


Figure 6-13. Example of a task force obstacle plan.

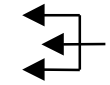
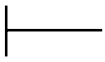
OBSTACLE EFFECT	PURPOSE	FIRES AND OBSTACLES MUST:	OBSTACLE CHARACTERISTICS
 DISRUPT ❶	• Breakup enemy formations. • Interrupt the enemy's timetable and C2. • Cause premature commitment of breach assets. • Cause the enemy to piecemeal his attack.	• Cause the enemy to deploy early. • Slow part of his formation while allowing part to advance unimpeded.	• Do not require extensive resources. • Difficult to detect at long range.
 FIX ❷	• Slow an attacker within an area so he can be destroyed. • Generate the time necessary for the friendly force to disengage.	• Cause the enemy to deploy into attack formation before encountering the obstacles. • Allow the enemy to advance slowly in an EA or AO. • Make the enemy fight in multiple directions once he is in the EA or AO.	• Arrayed in depth. • Span the entire width of the avenue of approach. • Must not make the terrain appear impenetrable.
 TURN ❸	• Force the enemy to move in the direction desired by the friendly commander.	• Prevent the enemy from bypassing or breaching the obstacle belt. • Maintain pressure on the enemy force throughout the turn. • Mass direct and indirect fires at the anchor point of the turn.	• Tie into impassable terrain at the anchor point. • Consist of obstacles in depth. • Provide a subtle orientation relative to the enemy's approach.
 BLOCK ❹	• Stop an attacker along a specific avenue of approach. • Prevent an attacker from passing through an AO or EA. • Stop the enemy from using an avenue of approach and force him to use another avenue of approach.	• Prevent the enemy from bypassing or penetrating through the belt. • Stop the enemy's advance. • Destroy all enemy breach efforts.	• Must tie into impassable terrain. • Consist of complex obstacles. • Defeat the enemy's mounted and dismounted breaching effort.

Table 6-2. Obstacle effects.

d. **Tactical Obstacles**. Obstacles are force-oriented combat multipliers. The task force employs tactical obstacles to influence the enemy's ability to move, mass, and reinforce directly. Tactical obstacles are integrated into the scheme of maneuver and fires to produce specific obstacle effects. Obstacles alone do not produce significant effects against the enemy; obstacles must be integrated with fires to be effective. The engineer section in Chapter 9 provides tables and specific information on engineer capabilities and obstacle effects. The following are the three types of tactical obstacles.

(1) ***Directed***. The brigade directs obstacles as specified tasks to the task force through the use of obstacle belts. The task force may use the same technique, but more likely will be specific about the location and type of obstacle. The commander may use directed obstacles or obstacle groups to achieve specific obstacle effects at key locations on the battlefield. In this case, the staff plans the obstacle control measures and resources as well as determines measures and tasks to subordinates to integrate the directed obstacles with fires.

(2) ***Situational***. Situational obstacles are obstacles that the brigade or task force plans and possibly prepares before an operation; however, they do not execute the obstacles unless specific criteria are met. Situational obstacles are "be-prepared" obstacles and

provide the commander flexibility for employing tactical obstacles based on battlefield developments. The commander may use engineer forces to emplace tactical obstacles rapidly, but more often he relies on scatterable mine systems. The brigade staff normally plans situational obstacles to allow the commander to shift his countermobility effort rapidly to where he needs it the most based on the situation. Execution triggers for situational obstacles are integrated into the decision support template (see Chapter 9, Section III, and FM 90-7, Chapter 7, for situational obstacles). Situational obstacles must be well integrated with tactical plans to avoid fratricide. Given the changes in engineer force structure, tactical concepts, and capabilities, situational obstacles are increasingly used instead of conventionally emplaced obstacles.

(3) ***Reserve***. Reserve obstacles are obstacles for which the commander restricts execution authority. These are "on-order" obstacles. The commander specifies the unit responsible for constructing, guarding, and executing the obstacle. Examples of reserve obstacles include preparing a bridge for destruction or an obstacle to close a lane. Units normally prepare reserve obstacles during the preparation phase. They execute the obstacle only on command of the authorizing commander or when specific criteria are met. (See FM 90-7, Chapter 6, for specific considerations for planning reserve obstacles.) It is critical for the unit to understand and rehearse actions to execute reserve obstacles.

NOTE: In addition to tactical obstacles, units also employ protective obstacles. Protective obstacles are a key component of survivability operations, providing friendly forces with close-in protection. (See FM 90-7.)

e. **Obstacle Groups**. Obstacle groups are one or more individual obstacles grouped to provide a specific obstacle effect. TFs integrate obstacle groups to ensure that company teams plan individual obstacles that support the scheme of maneuver. Company teams integrate individual obstacles with direct and indirect fire plans to achieve the specified obstacle group effect.

(1) Obstacle groups normally attack the maneuver of enemy TFs. Normally, commanders plan obstacle groups along enemy battalion AAs as defined by company team mobility corridors. They may plan a group along a company-size AA. Unlike obstacle zones or belts, obstacle groups are not "areas" but are relative locations for obstacle construction. Obstacle groups are represented by obstacle effect symbols (block, fix, turn, disrupt) on TF graphics; however, commanders may refine obstacle group symbology with individual obstacle graphics if the plan requires specific obstacle types.

(2) TF commanders plan obstacle groups within assigned obstacle zones or belts. When given a belt with an assigned effect, the TF commander may use any combination of group effects if the sum effect of all groups achieves the overall effect of the belt.

(3) Obstacle groups impose strict limitations on company team commanders to preserve the link between obstacle effects and the fire plan. The limitations are similar to the limitations imposed by a BP. A group does not give the exact location of obstacles in the group just as a BP does not show the exact location of each weapon in the company team. The company team commander and the emplacing engineer coordinate these details directly. Company team commanders may make changes to obstacles and fire control measures based on the reality of the terrain. These changes must be coordinated with and

tracked by the TF commander and staff to maintain the fidelity of the desired obstacle group effect and integration into the TF scheme of maneuver.

(4) TFs do not normally assign a company team more than one obstacle group; however, a company team may effectively fight two groups at a time if the terrain supports it. To mass fires on an obstacle group, more than one company team often covers a single obstacle group within an EA. In these cases, the commander responsible for establishing the EA is also responsible for integrating the obstacle group. Normally, the TF commander or S3 plays a significant role in building and synchronizing an EA covered by two or more company teams.

(5) Obstacle groups, resource factors, and standard individual obstacles are the basis of TF obstacle logistics planning. They enable the commander and staff to allocate the necessary resources to each obstacle group, EA, or company team BP. These tools also enable the staff to identify critical shortfalls, plan the flow of materials within the TF area, and schedule resupply.

f. **Tactical Obstacle Planning**. Detailed obstacle planning begins during COA development. The engineer focuses on the following five specifics in his scheme of engineer operations (SOEO) for the obstacle plan.

(1) ***Direct and Indirect Fire Analysis***. The direct and indirect fire analysis examines how engineers can best use obstacles to enhance the direct and indirect fire plan. The engineer must have a fundamental understanding of the direct and indirect fire and maneuver plans and the TF's organization of the EA to integrate obstacles effectively with the direct and indirect fire plan. The engineer must consider TF EAs, TRPs, indirect fire targets, unit locations, enemy formations, AAs, and the commander's obstacle intent in order to integrate obstacles effectively. Synchronization of direct and indirect fires with obstacles multiplies the relative effect on the enemy.

(2) ***Obstacle Intent Integration***. The engineer plans directed obstacle groups during the COA development process. Obstacle groups integrated into the COA sketch graphically depict the commander's obstacle intent to support the maneuver plan. Obstacle groups target specific enemy elements based on the SITEMP. The engineer generally allocates an obstacle group against a TF-sized AA with respect to the EAs, TRPs, indirect fire targets, unit locations, enemy formations, and AAs assessed during the direct fire analysis. This process parallels the staff's placement of a company team against the same size enemy force. The intent of the obstacle group supports subordinate unit task and purpose. The engineer recommends specific obstacle group effects to the commander based on terrain, resources, time available, and the TF commander's obstacle intent.

(3) ***Obstacle Priority***. The staff determines the priority of each obstacle group. The commander's intent and the most likely enemy COA clearly influence the priority. The obstacle priority should reflect the TF's most critical obstacle requirement. The TF engineer considers flank protection, weapons types and ranges, and the overall commander's intent for the entire force before placing obstacle priority on the main EA. Priorities assist the engineer in allocating resources and ensuring that the most critical obstacle groups are constructed first.

(4) ***Mobility Requirements***. The engineer identifies TF mobility requirements by analyzing the scheme of maneuver, counterattack (CATK) options, reserve planning priorities, CS and CSS movement requirements, and adjacent and higher unit missions,

maneuver, and movement. The engineer integrates this analysis into obstacle group planning and avoids impeding friendly maneuver whenever possible. Because the bulk of the engineer force is committed to countermobility and survivability during defensive preparation, the TF commander uses clear obstacle restrictions on specific areas within the TF AO to maintain mobility. If obstacles must be constructed along a mobility corridor that primarily supports friendly movement, the TF must plan and rehearse a lane or gap and associated closure procedures. These lanes or gaps may be closed with situational or reserve obstacles.

(a) Beyond preparing and marking lanes and gaps through obstacles, engineers normally perform mobility tasks once defensive preparations are complete. Mobility assets may then be positioned to counter templated enemy situational obstacles, or be task organized to the reserve, CATK force, or any other unit that must maneuver or move subsequent to the execution of the defense. To do this effectively, the engineers and the supported maneuver unit must integrate, prepare, and rehearse. Since this manner of mobility support is critical to the success of the maneuver plan, timely linkup and coordination must be factored into the overall defensive preparation timeline.

(b) Sometimes the TF may require significant mobility support during defensive preparation. Examples may include route clearance, road repair or maintenance, and landing zone (LZ) and pickup zone (PZ) clearance. Brigade engineers are adequately resourced to perform this type of mobility support, but they clearly cannot concurrently prepare the defense and execute these tasks. Thus, the TF requires augmentation from a divisional multifunction engineer battalion. These engineers perform general engineering tasks, leaving the brigade engineers available to construct the TF defense.

6-49. SURVIVABILITY

Survivability operations in support of ground maneuver elements are increasingly limited given force structure and tactical concepts. Digging in combat vehicles is a technique that still has value in many situations, but the increasing need for mobility in defensive operations and the proliferation of precision munitions reduce the effectiveness of static, dug-in forces. Survivability efforts within the TF should focus on protection of assets that must remain relatively static (such as communication nodes), support of logistical and decontamination operations, and survivability for defending dismounted infantry.